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**Diaspora Tourism and Homeland Development  
Exploring the Impacts of African American Tourists on the Livelihoods of Local Traders in Southern Ghana**

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DIASPORA TOURISM AND HOMELAND DEVELOPMENT: EXPLORING THE  
IMPACTS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN TOURISTS ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF  
LOCAL TRADERS IN SOUTHERN GHANA

By

Nana Michelle Tiwaa Afrifah

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requirements for the degree of

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## **Abstract**

The value of Diasporas to homeland development is a key research area in tourism development literature. The African Diaspora has been contributing to homeland development in a number of ways, but especially as tourists. Tourism research on sub-Saharan Africa has focused little on the supply side issues such as the nature and impact of African American tourists' spending behaviour whilst holidaying in the continent. This is important because it is of great concern in tourism development literature whether vulnerable people such as local craft traders receive a livable share of visitor spending.

So using the concept of Diaspora relations and homeland development as a platform, the thesis assesses the benefits of African American tourists' expenditure on the livelihoods of local craft traders in several tourist sites in southern Ghana, whilst also examining the impacts of tour operators who manage these tourists on their expenditure patterns. The study found that though African American tourists provide a significant input into traders' total incomes, their market alone does not provide traders with a survivable or livable income. They do not spend enough to provide the sole source of traders' incomes. Tourist expenditure on handicrafts such as beads and fabrics, although infrequent, was nonetheless a key source of income for craftsmen and has enabled them to sustain themselves, their homes, their businesses and their families. The study also traces the commodity chain involved in the production of one particular handicraft, beaded crafts, providing insights into the global and local factors which influence who benefits from their production and trade before they reach the final point of sale to tourists. Beaded crafts are heavily patronized by Diaspora tourists. Sales from these were found not only to benefit larger scale businesses but also to reach smaller one-man businesses, helping them to sustain themselves. As the beaded craft industry is international and sources many of its beads from China as well as other sub-Saharan African markets, tourist expenditure in Ghana is also aiding bead sellers and manufacturers in neighboring African countries.

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## **Chapter 1. Diaspora Tourism, Homeland Development and Trader Livelihoods**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Using the concept of Diaspora relations and homeland development as a platform, this thesis assesses the benefits of Diaspora tourism to Ghana's tourism sector through the exploration of tourists' financial investments and economic contributions to the tourism sector, and most importantly, their effects on the actors involved in conducting trade in the tourist-serving communities. Specifically, it explores the impacts of African American tourist expenditure on the livelihoods of local craft traders in specific areas of the tourist trail (Figure 8.1). Focusing on the African American tourist market and its impacts is important because the world's Diaspora have come to represent a significant element of global and international travel movements. The African Diaspora in particular (both indigenous and foreign) undertakes considerable VFR (visiting friends and relatives) inspired movements, remittance-inspired movements and emotionally-inspired travels to their homeland. Thus they are a market that has "the potential to deliver destinations important gains in visitor numbers and spending" (Coles, 2004:219). Another reason for using the African American tourist market as a vehicle for assessment is reflected in the Ghanaian government's considerable investment (monetary and non-monetary) in Diaspora relations, which is explained further throughout the thesis.

In exploring the impacts of tourist spending, this study also aims to trace the network of beneficiaries of African American expenditure. It places emphasis on actors such as local craft sellers (including hawkers and vendors), producers, distributors of resources and manufacturers within the artefacts and crafts sector, who are seen as valuable tourism players. In order to assess such impacts, three key players of the Ghanaian tourism industry are focused on: the African American tourist, the handicraft trader who caters to the requirements of the heritage-seeking Diaspora tourist and the tour operator who manages them. The role and extent to which tour operators influence or direct

African American tourist spending towards the informal trade sector is significant. Their level of influence is considered crucial in assessing the impacts of such tourists and as such they are an important focus for this study. The key hypothesis with reference to the tour operators is that their management techniques not only affect the flow of potential money (Cavlek, 2002), but also tourists' 'decisions' to spend at specific areas and on specific goods.

## **1.2 Background to Study: the Diaspora, Tourism and Homeland Development**

Diasporas were formed from the dispersal of immeasurable numbers of people, be it through forced or unforced migrations, politically-induced emigrations, economically-influenced relocations, occupationally-induced movements or through transatlantic slavery (Akyeampong, 2000). The African Diaspora was mainly created from the forced relocations of these people as a result of the transatlantic slave trade. This separation created an emotional pull to reconnect with the African continent, which in turn created a desire for members of the African Diaspora to return to the homeland from which they had been separated. Thus, tourism became the vehicle through which a considerable numbers of African Americans tourists propelled themselves into the African interior to temporarily encounter their roots and to seek a state of emotional and spiritual balance.

Tourism, which is often considered to be the world's largest industry (Hall and Page, 2006), has developed into one of the most powerful activities and fastest growing sectors to influence economic growth (Telfer and Sharpley, 2008; UNWTO, 2011). It has become intensely diversified and a significant source of income for many developing countries (UNWTO, 2011). Developing countries such as South Africa, Morocco, Egypt, Namibia, Kenya and Tanzania have all opened their destinations for tourism to become a driving economic and financial force (UNWTO, 2011) for the nation as a whole, as well as for the livelihoods of local tourism actors. In 2012, international tourist arrivals exceeded 1 billion for the first time, and produced an impressive 550 million international tourist arrivals for advanced economies and 485



million tourist arrivals for emerging economies (UNWTO, 2013a). Sub-Saharan Africa received 33.8 million, a 3.3% share of all international tourists (UNWTO, 2013a), and in 2011 generated over \$20bn in tourism receipts (UNWTO, 2012). The efforts to stimulate the contribution and involvement of Diasporas in tourism, and specifically in their homelands, have been pioneered by various developing countries which consider tourism to be a key stimulant for their economies. Thus, numerous financial and non-financial efforts and incentives have been made to encourage the Diaspora tourist to return to their motherland to invest. The African, Indian, Chinese and Jewish Diaspora have all been involved in organizing conferences, meetings and workshops which have been used as ways through which the Diaspora community has been assembled and a means of tapping into such a market (Fontaine, 2002; Lew and Wong, 2002; Pratt and Okigbo, 2004; Thaindian News, 2008a).

Africans in the Diaspora in particular have played prominent roles in many local development schemes as well as influencing tourism policies within the continent (Akyeampong, 2000). African American residents in Ghana have established projects such as tour operations, hotels and resorts and eateries, and invested in areas such as education, infrastructural development and real estate, thereby injecting financial resources and technical knowledge into the country. The government of Ghana, recognizing their importance for potential investments in particular has encouraged their unification with the African continent through investing considerably in the Ghanaian heritage tourism market. As a result, the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations (MOTDR), which was established in 1993 to “underscore the government’s commitment to tourism development” (Sirakaya, Teye and Sonmez, 2002:58), has played host to and initiated numerous programmes, workshops, functions and festivals all geared at encouraging the Diaspora’s return to the ‘homeland’. These initiatives have encouraged the development of heritage-inspired activities, which are now popularly referred to as the periods of Emancipation and PANAFEST. Emancipation is an event that originally commenced in Jamaica and which now constitutes a series of functions, programs and ceremonies that draw the African Diaspora to Ghana (Hasty, 2002). These festivals have now become major events held annually in Ghana (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Emancipation themed festivals in Ghana  
Source: Adapted from Touringghana, 2008 and GTSR, 2007

Event	Purpose	Sub events
Emancipation day celebrations*	To commemorate the final abolition of slavery in the British colonies and to acknowledge the struggles of those who fought against such oppression	Grand Durbar of chiefs, Wreath laying ceremonies Healing/reconciliation/Akwaaba ceremonies Libation pouring and spiritual bathing
PANAFEST * (Pan-African Festival)	A bi-annual cultural event that celebrates the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the development of the African continent by re-uniting the Diaspora with Africans on the continent	Grand Durbar of chiefs Conferences/ Bazaar/Expo Rites of passage ceremonies Slave march re-enactments Musical and dramatic performance
The Joseph Project **	To encourage the return of the African Diaspora to their homeland in order to elevate the continent. The event parallels with the return of the biblical Joseph from enslavement	Healing ceremony Pilgrimages Slave Forts tours

\*the Emancipation day celebrations and the PANAFEST are held concurrently due to the similarity in themes and objectives that run through both events

\*\*celebrated in 2007 as a onetime event to coincide with Ghana's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the North Atlantic slave trade

In 2009, following a change in government in 2008, the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations shortened its name and is now simply referred to as 'the Ministry of Tourism' or MOT (Touring Ghana, 2013). As a result of these initiatives, African American tourists have travelled extensively to Ghana. There is a very significant flow of African American tourists during certain peak months. The first peak is in February and March<sup>1</sup>, when Diaspora tourist numbers begin to increase due to Black History month in the USA and the spring break period. The second peak is in July when the commencement of the Emancipation and PANAFEST celebrations causes the biggest increase in tourist numbers, especially of African American tourists. Sometimes, a third

<sup>1</sup> These figures are based on data obtained from a travel and tour company in Ghana.

peak occurs in August, when other key Emancipation-related festivals are still taking place. By this time the heritage sites and historical trails of Ghana are saturated with visitors who are not only keen to experience all that Ghana has to offer, but also the possibility of giving back. The importance of these events is further reflected in the fact that the flow of African American tourists was also present during the Nkrumah era - in the immediate postcolonial period (1957 onwards) when the first President of Ghana sent out a Pan-African call for investment in Africa by the African Diaspora.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Studies on the impacts of African American tourists on their homeland communities have mainly focused on their social and cultural relations with the host community (Bruner, 1996; Agarwal and Yochum, 1999; Finley, 2001; Butler, *et al.*, 2002; Hasty, 2002; Richards S., 2002; Timothy and Teye, 2004; Mwakikagile, 2005; Gaines, 2006; Mwakikagile, 2006). These subjects have become very popular in Diaspora studies and have created an interest in further studying the historical connections between Africans and African Americans (Barry, 1982; Harris, 1982). Themes have included the past and present interest in slavery, the degree of authenticity of the Diaspora 'African' identity and narratives surrounding their return to their homeland. For example Pinho (2008:71) discussed the varying relationships that exist amongst sojourners who possess "a shared black ancestry" with the host community, and how this may influence the dynamics of "the colonialist and imperialist aspects of tourist-host relationships". Similar issues were explored by Jackson and Cothran (2003), who noticed a lack of attention on the relationship amongst the black community and a stronger focus on the issues that affected the relationship between black people and white people.

The studies that have discussed the discord observed in many of these social interactions (Bruner, 1996; Finley, 2001; Mensah, 2004; Schramm, 2004; Timothy and Teye, 2004; Mwakikagile, 2005; Polgreen, 2005b; Richards, 2005; Mwakikagile, 2006) frequently note that visitor -host relations are often characterized by the hosts (who are usually the more disadvantaged party) becoming overwhelmed with the forces of the by-products of

globalisation. When it comes to touristic encounters, however, it is only in a limited number of studies that authors have featured local craft traders as the main focus of such vulnerability. Also, the studies that have tackled Diaspora relations and tourism development have focused mainly on large scale impacts at the national level, and not enough on the impacts made on local communities. Focusing on tourists' ability to create impact at the macro-level has often overshadowed how they affect local livelihoods at the micro-level. For instance, national tourism statistics that focus on receipts, purpose of visit and places visited, usually provide only a broad picture of how tourists generally impact on the local community. So a refocus towards studying how the livelihoods of the vulnerable are affected by tourism revenue was encouraged (Ashley and Mitchell, 2007). Yet ensuring that financially vulnerable tourism actors, such as local craft traders in Ghana, receive a livable share<sup>2</sup> of visitor spending is often difficult to calculate as there is limited data available on the "direct and induced effects of the crafts sector on the national economy, namely through direct sales to tourists" (WTO, 2008). Furthermore, analyzing what portion of tourist sales can be directly attributed to the African American tourist is another challenging area worthy of assessment.

This is because tourist expenditure or receipts in Ghana (like many other sub-Saharan countries) is often classified by nationality and not ethnicity, and so the effects of specific ethnic markets on specific target markets cannot be thoroughly assessed. The National Tourism Policy of Ghana (NTP) has observed that *"in spite of the substantial growth of the tourism industry recorded over the past 15 years, the true wealth-creating and poverty-reducing potential of the sector is not fully grasped by policy makers"*(NTP, 2006:13). The document also expresses the view that it is important to diversify Ghana's resource base as much as possible as this makes it less vulnerable to changes in other significant sectors like Cocoa, remittances<sup>3</sup> and gold (NTP, 2006). However the discovery of oil in 2007 (not a factor in 2006) has changed the resource-

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<sup>2</sup> Receiving a 'livable share' is when incomes received by traders are considered enough to survive on by catering to their basic needs. In other words, such incomes must be proportionate to the cost of goods and services in the Ghanaian context.

<sup>3</sup> The NTP document considers remittances as unsustainable because it sees the future generations and the youth becoming more removed from their homeland. See page 13 of document

sustainability debate. This discovery has the potential to help the country strengthen its economic growth by 14% making it the strongest in sub-Saharan Africa (Euromonitor, 2012). But with the government focusing more attention on the potential of oil, tourism is becoming less of a priority. Diaspora homeland attachments, however, have become a 'resource' that *is* sustainable. It is an attachment that has existed since the slave trade era, has continued till today and is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Their financial contributions therefore become more vital than ever, hence the touristic campaigns to reconnect them with the continent. This is not to say that any discourse between African American tourists and Ghanaians with regards to issues of identity and concepts of homeland will not have a place in the study. The possible implications of these on the spending habits of tourists are noted and will also be addressed. In addition to this, the seasonality effect of the heritage period on local businesses and livelihoods is an issue that is also addressed. But the most important area of consideration is the impact of tourist spending on the livelihoods of these local traders. These considerations have therefore led to four objectives of the study.

#### **1.4 Aims and Objectives of Thesis**

The study aims to explore the impacts of Diaspora tourism, specifically African American tourists, on the livelihoods of craft traders at various tourist hotspots within the Central Region, Greater Accra Region and Eastern Region of Ghana. In order to achieve this, five specific objectives were put into place;

- a) To explore popular Ghanaian handicrafts that are produced for, and consumed by, African American tourists in Ghana
- b) To assess the spending habits of African American tourists on craft products
- c) To assess how expenditure from craft sales is used by handicraft traders
- d) To trace or map the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure for one craft product at specific sites along the tourist trail.

- e) To assess the roles that tour operators and their management of African American tourists play in influencing the flow of tourist expenditure and consequently influencing traders' income in the process

This study argues that this tourist-host scenario of trade has been influenced by various tourism actors, ranging from tour operators to tourism policy makers in government, all in the hopes of gaining financial and economic benefits. It also posits that tour operators have a 'considerable' influence on tourists' expenditure patterns, especially in emerging nations such as Ghana which usually takes a 'who you know' approach in terms of social capital. This concept will be explored further in the study. Public and private sector collaborations and considerable spend has been invested in this 'union' of tourist, trader and tour operator, therefore assessing the results of this socially constructed phenomenon and its 'true' benefits is essential.

### **1.5 Scope of Study: the Central Region, the Greater Accra Region and the Eastern Region of Ghana**

#### **1.5.1 Geographical Boundaries**

The study focuses on three key regions of the country, The Greater Accra region, the Eastern Region and the Central Region of Ghana, all located in the southern sector of the country. However, because the study traces a 'network' of beneficiaries, the initial area of focus and the bulk of quantified and tabulated research interviews and analysis were in Elmina and Cape Coast. Additional interviews, observation and analysis took place in the capital city of Accra (Greater Accra Region), Koforidua and Odumasi-Krobo (Eastern Region).

#### **1.5.2 Temporal Boundaries**

The study took place over a period of six months spread over two years. The research was undertaken during the Diaspora tourists' peak period and off-peak period of

visitation. These covered the periods of February; Black History Month in North America and late June till mid-August; PANAFEST and Emancipation celebrations in Ghana.

## **1.6 Justification of Study Area**

Ghana is generally separated into North and South, where the Northern half includes the Upper-East Region, Upper-West Region, Northern Region, part of the Brong-Ahafo Region and parts of the Volta Region. Aside from the study regions, Southern Ghana is generally understood to include the Ashanti Region (another popular region of visitation in tourists' itineraries), the lower portions of the Brong-Ahafo Region and the Volta Region and the Western Region. For the purpose of this study, however, only the Central Region, Greater Accra Region and the Eastern Region of the south are focused on. Southern Ghana and the study areas were initially chosen as the primary research region for the study as it forms a vital part of most of Ghana's tourist circuits and itineraries, and constitutes the main heritage tourist trail or tourist route for African American tourists and other African Diasporas. It also possesses a majority of heritage sites related to the slave trade, the fight for emancipation and 'Panafricanism'. These include the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Site, Independence Square/Arch, the George Padmore Library, the W.E.B Dubois Centre and Memorial Site which are all in Accra; the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle in the Central Region and the Slave River and River Pra at *Assin Manso*. Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle in particular constitute a vital area for analysis within the study because of their connection with the transatlantic slave trade, their designation as world heritage sites by the UNWTO and their popularity amongst the Diaspora heritage market

Accessibility to tour operators was a key part of this study and as such southern Ghana and specifically Accra, Cape Coast and Elmina were vital locations because they offered easy access to tour operators and subsequently tourists. Legacy or cultural heritage tours are popular with the African American market so these chosen routes are also popular amongst numerous local travel and tour agencies. The Central Region in particular has

gained considerable popularity due to its ability to combine preserved scenic landscapes with its abundant cultural and historical exhibits (Sirakaya *et al.*, 2002), hence its popularity with tourists and its suitability for this study.

Although the Northern half of the country (the Northern Region) also possesses several landmarks and sites involved in the transatlantic slave trade (*Salaga* slave market, slave cemetery and *Gwollu* defense wall), travelling to the north is often seen as tedious and time consuming. This is because it can take as long as 17 hours to reach parts of the Northern Region and Upper West Region by coach. In addition to this there are limited facilities and accommodation available for the modern traveler, so tourists on a short stay (1 week or less) usually prefer to stay in the south.

### **1.7 Tourism Actors, Local Traders and Handicrafts, their Denominations and Context in Study**

The term ‘local trader’ features extensively in this study. The term ‘trader’ has been defined in numerous ways. The Oxford Dictionary describes it as “a person who buys and sells goods, currency, or shares” (Oxford Dictionary, 2013), while the Merriam Webster Dictionary regards it as someone who “buys and sells in search of short term profits” (Merriam Webster, 2013). The term ‘trader’ in the context of this study will refer to hawkers, peddlers, kiosk or stall owners<sup>4</sup> and others who are engaged in “survivalist enterprises” (Mayrhofer and Hendriks, 2003:595). It will also include mini shop owners, with the exception of those traders that have larger retail stores usually located in the higher end of the trade market. This is because focus has been placed on those regarded as ‘most in need’ and ‘most vulnerable’, in terms of their limited access to adequate financial and physical capital for their businesses to grow. This demarcation is also reflected in the type of structures or facilities available to traders to create their business. An extreme example of this vulnerability is the style of trade used by informal second-hand clothing sellers who are locally referred to as ‘*Foze*’. The term was coined

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<sup>4</sup> See Ochia, 1990. Ochia provides an accurate and telling description of what stall owners in Nigeria are like in terms of sales presence and techniques. This description mirrors ‘stall owners’ in Ghana and in other west African nations.



by the local Ghanaian population to describe second-hand or used goods sold. Most Foze traders do not have any form of shelter or trading structure at all and display their items by having them strewn across the floor. Although the tags ‘hawker’ and ‘peddler’ have been used as descriptive words, the actual ‘types’ of traders differ slightly within the sample and are characterized by ‘how’ they sell; whether they use of a *table-top*, *basin (itinerant)*, *kiosk etc.* This is so that the specific nature of the trade can be easily identified and more accurately described within the study. In numerous studies, the phrase ‘street traders’ or ‘roadside traders’ has been used to more accurately describe informal sellers located on or near the streets and pavements (Olaniyan, 1988; Ochia, 1990; Mayrhofer and Hendriks, 2003); this distinction was omitted from this study as many of the traders are itinerant and shift continuously from stationary to itinerant while others have designated areas in which they sell their products.

Hence the term ‘local trader’, although generic, is considered the most appropriate description of the study sample. Local traders often become a driving force for an economy. Their businesses often form a majority of the domestic trade in developing economies. In South Africa, it has been estimated, for example, that their informal economy “absorbs approximately one quarter of the labour force...and is the fastest growing sector of employment” (Mayrhofer and Hendriks, 2003:595). In Ghana, although a majority of the working population is involved in agriculture (55.8%), 15 % are said to be involved in ‘trade’ (GLSS 5, 2008). The term ‘handicraft trader’ or ‘craft trader’ is a specific form of local trade which also features prominently in this study. Crafts vary from indigenous items or artefacts; tailored to attract the visitor, to tailoring, masonry, pottery, sculptures, wickerwork, glass blowing. According to Barber and Krivoshlykova (2006), it is a creative means through which cultures seek to express themselves. Though crafts can refer to a wide range of handiwork (Rogerson, 2000), the term ‘handicrafts’ as a noun within this study, will refer to the tourist-targeted and indigenously inspired items sold at tourist centres throughout Ghana that usually comprise of bead work, paintings, basketry, jewellery, bags, wallets, hand woven fabrics, masks, sculptures, figurines, drums, musical instruments amongst others. The fifth version of the Ghana Living Standard’s Survey’s (2008:37) closest classification of

the handicrafts industry is referred to as “crafts and related trades”. This classification is accepted (and used throughout the study). In general, Markwick’s characterization of craft industries is also seen as a helpful guide to the types of products researched: “arts and crafts produced through skills in the use of relatively simple tools, without involving large economies of scale” (Markwick, 2001:30).

The decision was made to capitalize the word *Diaspora* throughout the text to ensure consistency. In some cases the word has been capitalized when referring to the Jewish Diaspora but not so when referring to other dispersed populations of different ethnicities (Merriam Webster, 2013). But in this case the demarcation is not required as any reference to the Jewish or non-Jewish Diasporas are clearly stated. After some consideration, the decision was made not to hyphenate the noun phrase *African American*. Deciding whether to hyphenate phrases that deal with origin has been the subject of controversy because of the negative patriotic connotations associated with hyphenated nationalities. Although a hyphenated or non hyphenated noun phrase would not impact on this particular thesis in any way or alter its meaning, the decision not to do so in this case was based on *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.)<sup>5</sup>, which takes a strong view against hyphenating such nouns because it may connote that people with ‘hyphenated nationalities’ are not as American as those with unhyphenated ones

## **1.8 Importance of Study**

Among tourism research on sub-Saharan Africa, studies on West Africa have been limited. This in itself makes this study significant because it is making an important contribution to knowledge about an understudied area. Furthermore, among the work that has been conducted specifically on tourism in West Africa, other tourism subjects have been more popular than Diaspora tourism. Thus there is a limited body of knowledge on Diaspora tourism in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, when Diaspora tourism

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<sup>5</sup> See Pickett, J.P. (2011) *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

to sub-Saharan Africa has been studied, the studies have often focused on the experiences (Ebron, 1999; Gaines, 2006; Osei-Tutu, 2007) rather than on economic exchanges. In more than one respect, therefore, this study covers areas of Diaspora relations and tourism that have previously been unexplored. Work on the economic benefits of tourism in West Africa has usually focused on the benefits gained from international tourists in general (Acquah, 2013) rather than from Diaspora tourists specifically, and where research has focused on Diaspora tourists it has been on migrant Diasporas and how their remittances have and can benefit their homelands. This lack of scholarship on African American tourists and their economic impacts highlights the value of this study further which is addressing issues which have not been covered before. Current research has yet to explore the supply side in Diaspora tourism studies or to identify the importance of this tourist market to their homeland, especially through the channel of retail or souvenir shopping. There have been a number of studies on Elmina and Cape Coast and on tourism to slave sites there (Reed, 2010; Gbedema, 2012; Koutra and Diaz, 2013), but this study is a much larger study with more detail. Although there has also been work done separately on tourist souvenirs and purchases, their functions, issues of authenticity and the dynamic nature of their meaning (Collins-Kreiner and Zins, 2011), there has been little focus on those tourist souvenirs purchased in sub-Saharan Africa or West Africa and even less on souvenirs purchased in Ghana. Though literature on Diaspora relations has taken shape in many ways, this is one of the essential gaps that still exists. Thus this study explores a whole new dimension when it comes to the literature on tourism retailing and is one of the first studies to examine expenditure impacts on local livelihoods. And because of the exploration of the 'dark' nature of the emotional connection that exists between the tourist and the souvenir purchased, the study also progresses the current literature that examines meaning within souvenirs by exploring a 'darker' sense of meaning when it comes to the tourist shopping experience.

This study also explores issues related to informal sector livelihoods, commodity chain networks and the part played by tourist expenditure: issues that are all important in current tourism development debates. The focus here is on the part played by the

Diaspora in the development of homeland tourism. It is important that these issues are discussed because informal sector activities like the handicraft industries are seen as extremely valuable to tourism development (CIGS, 1998; WTO, 2008). It is a financially valuable industry and a significant source of earnings for many sub-Saharan African nations (ITC, 2005; Eiligmann, 2009; Mitchell and Ashley, 2009) as well as a major source of employment (CIGS, 1998; Richards, 2007). It is also one of the industries in which developing regions are making significant impacts financially on the global trading stage (Hnatow, 2009; UNCTAD, 2010). And since investment in tourism actors such as handicraft traders are 'limited' (Holden, Sonne and Novelli, 2011), it is important that these vulnerable tourist serving sectors are able to sustain themselves so that they may continue to cater to the tourism industry and encourage its sustenance and patronage. In livelihood debates, a sustainable livelihood requires having adequate access to financial capital, human capital, social capital, physical capital and natural capital (DFID, 1999). This study addresses all the forms of capital (financial capital in the form of tourist expenditure; human and social capital in the commodity chain analysis; natural capital in the form of resources for craft production and physical capital in terms of the various types of selling stalls that traders have) and shows how they function in the tourist-trader scene in Southern Ghana.

Chapter one has introduced the thesis, the research problem, its aims and objectives, the background to study and its scope and importance.

Chapter two provides a review of the literature related to tourism and development and its value to developing economies and the role of international tourism and international tourist expenditure in fuelling tourism development. It then focuses on the value of the Diaspora and Diaspora tourism to homeland development and situates the Diaspora and African Diaspora in literature and reviews the ways in which these markets have been depicted, researched and explored in literature. Some of the issues discussed relate to how African-based Diaspora relations have been portrayed in a controversial light (Bruner, 1996; Mwakikagile, 2005; Richards, 2005) and how this has on occasion affected commercial relations. The chapter then reviews the issues

associated with the imperfections of homeland return in terms of their financial contributions to the homeland and their involvement in developmental affairs. The review then goes on to look at the role of the tour operator in tourism development and their position in the tourism industry. It looks at their value to the touristic experience and makes mention of several instances and ways in which their influence has shaped or affected the touristic experience.

Chapter three continues the review of the literature on Diaspora tourism but focuses on several sub-Saharan African Diaspora destinations with a known slave heritage and how Diaspora tourists have made significant contributions there. It discusses locations in Benin, Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal which all acted as sources for slave labour during the transatlantic slave trade, and how heritage tourism is acted out there. In addition to Ghana, these four locations have become significant areas of travel for black Diaspora tourists. The chapter then looks at how relics of slavery there have become popular tourist attractions to African American tourists, some of whom are global personalities and are making significant contributions there. It then sets the scene for the next chapter by discussing the current state of tourism development in Ghana.

Chapter four covers the research methods used in examining the relationship between the three tourism actors when in the tourism setting. The chapter discusses the overall methodological approach used in detail and then justifies the strategic use of a range of research methods. It also discusses the rationale behind the chosen case study sites and their importance for the study. The technical specifics of the research process such as data processing and analysis, sampling methods and the research design are also explained in detail. The chapter then discusses the strengths and limitations of the chosen methods of research and ends with a discussion on the ethical approach taken. .

Chapter five is the first results chapter and offers insight into the commercial interactions between the African American tourist and craft traders. The first part of this chapter is descriptive and examines the nature of Ghanaian handicrafts produced for, and consumed by, African American visitors to Ghana. It pays particular attention to

the nature and patronage of beaded handicrafts because of their key role in the thesis. It also discusses how traders identify and perceive African American tourists. Some of the perceptions are discussed in more detail in this section here while the rest are explored further in Chapter six.

Chapter six is the second results chapter and examines the influence of tourist expenditure on trader expenditure patterns and incomes. This is examined in several ways. First it explores some of the income-related issues that arose out of trader perceptions in Chapter five. Then issues such as the influence of seasonality on trader businesses, tourist purchasing strategies, the influence of tourists on product change, trader expenditure patterns, African American purchasing habits compared to other tourists are also explored. The second part of the chapter also shows how results in the first site led the researcher to further explore commercial relations in other sites.

Chapter seven traces the network of beneficiaries of African American tourist expenditure. It looks at how the various tourism stakeholders are involved in the production, supply and sale of tourists' handicrafts.. Thus it explores resource, production, design and sales networks within the chain. One particularly popular handicraft, beaded crafts, is used to explore processes within the commodity chain as well as discussing the geographical distribution of impacts along the chain and its associated constraints and opportunities. Using beaded crafts as a focus provides insights into the complex local and global networks in the final products sold by individual traders, and thus how the tourism impact spreads beyond the specific locations visited, as well as providing detailed insights into the bead manufacturing industry in southern Ghana. Two case studies of bead manufacturers are also used to enrich the chapter and provide first hand insight into how tourist expenditure benefits bead traders and affects their livelihoods.

Chapter eight examines the level of influence of the tourist tour operator on trader livelihoods through their management techniques of the tourists. It assesses how the direction of tourist expenditure is affected by tour operator recommendations and

structured itineraries and how these affect craft sellers' sales income and the viability of their livelihoods.

Finally, Chapter nine presents the key findings of the study around which the research objectives have been framed. It then discusses the limitations of the study and the implications for further research in relation to tourism studies, Diaspora tourism, West African livelihoods and commodity chain analysis. It also highlights the originality and contribution of the research as well as the importance of the findings in relation to the research literature.

## **Chapter 2. International Tourism and its Value to Homeland Development**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This review of the literature takes a broad but relevant approach to the research topic in order to situate the various tourism actors within academic literature as well as accounting for a broader group of socio-economic considerations. It will firstly seek to situate tourism and international tourism within current literature by analysing the impacts of both agents on developing economies. It will then look at the value of international tourist expenditure to tourism development.

It will then explore the importance of Diaspora tourism to homeland development by looking at the African Diaspora and the African American tourist in literature; not only on their uniqueness as a tourist market but also on their impacts on their homelands, the agents that have shaped their return to the homeland, the issues and debates surrounding their level of engagement with homeland development, their financial contributions and some of the controversies that surround homeland return and development.

The review then goes on to look at the role of the tour operator in tourism development and their position in the tourism industry.

### **2.2 The Importance of Tourism**

Several key authors in tourism development debates such as Ashley (2000), Basu, (2003), Beal (2003), Ghosh, Siddique and Gabbay (2003a & 2003b), Singh (2003), Theobald (2005) and Telfer and Sharpley (2008) have all discussed how tourism is of economic significance and how it is influencing global mobility. According to Singh (2003) tourism, as compared with other sectors of the economy, is often utilized as a fast-track process in stimulating an economy. The author vividly describes that those who embrace tourism regard the industry as “painless therapy for many socio-economic ills”, (p.30) and that the industry is often seen as a universal remedy for the rectification or



improvement of developmental inconsistencies particularly in the case of developing economies. For such developing countries, tourism's contributions to an ailing economy is crucial, often replacing depleted or insufficient resources as a primary form of foreign exchange and encouraging the injection of financial resources (Valene, 1989; Asiedu, 1997; Sinclair, 1998; Chen and Devereux 1999). It used to be centralized within a few developed nations (Ghosh *et al.*, 2003b), but it has now stretched further south to less developed countries (Brohman, 1996; Ghosh *et al.*, 2003a) as tourist flows move from developed to less developed economies (Telfer and Sharpley, 2008) to embrace novel experiences. There have been a number of studies done on Ghana which have explored the potential of tourism to develop local communities and the country as a whole. The study by Holden *et al.*, (2011) is especially central to this study as it explores tourism impacts from the perspectives of the poor and the vulnerable in Elmina. The study looks at some very important issues that this research work also seeks to address: poverty, livelihoods and especially the views of the vulnerable. Holden *et al.*, (2011) found that the views of the poor were instrumental to ensuring that tourism development could help reduce poverty in the region. Wuleka (2012) who concentrated her work in the Upper West Region of Ghana found that tourism there helped provide locals with some basic amenities, including a school, as well as providing the local working community (including craft sellers) with extra income. Similar but more general studies by Asamoah (2013) and Havi and Enu (2013) also discussed how international tourism contributes positively to the country.

Asamoah (2013) mentioned that in light of this positive impact, significant improvements still had to be made in policy formulation and in the national tourism development strategy. Havi and Enu (2013) who examined the impact of tourism on Ghana's economic performance suggested that international tourism be encouraged as it had a positive effect on the country's National Gross Domestic Product. Mensah's (2012) study on residents' perception of the socio-economic impacts of tourism in Tafi Atome, also found that residents believed that tourism had made significant environmental and social contributions to their wildlife and their community. Like this study, Mensah's study is important because it asks ordinary people or the local

population their views on the impacts of tourism. Whilst many of the studies have used heritage as a vehicle or backdrop for exploration, studies such as the one by Asiedu and Gbedema (2011) rather discussed the use of Agriculture as a vehicle for tourism development in Ghana. In their opinion, transforming farm lands into tourist attractions was seen as a unique opportunity to diversify the country's tourism product. Evidently these studies are extensive and all conclude the same issue, that tourism is a key element for development in Ghana.

### **2.3 International Tourism**

International tourism is considered the world's "largest export industry" (Beal, 2003:150). As explained in Chapter one, Africa received a significant amount of global international tourist arrivals and in terms of growth has performed relatively well. Sub-Saharan Africa has also performed well on the global stage, so far and has continued to show positive results and is forecasted to continue to do well for 2013 (UNWTO, 2013a). In spite of various global financial challenges that have affected most of the world, tourist-related growth in sub-Saharan Africa has remained steady. But even more importantly is the significant amount of international tourist receipts received and how these are contributing to tourism development in the region.

### **2.4 The Value of International Tourist Expenditure**

It is evident that the economic transactions that occur during the Diaspora touristic experience between the visitor and host community constitute a vital part of the encounter (Cornelissen, 2005). Transactions such as tourist spending, investments, tips and even gift-giving play a vital role in the stimulation of not only the specific region in which expenditure is concentrated, but in the developing economy as a whole. Africa received 3% (\$34bn) in international tourist receipts in 2012 (UNWTO, 2013c). This is because tourists from many countries outside of sub-Saharan Africa are spending significantly during their travels. International tourist expenditure from a number of countries (Table 2.1) shows that the Chinese tourist market dominated with \$102bn

Table 2.1 World's top tourism spenders  
Source: adapted from UNWTO, 2013b

Rank	Country	International tourism expenditure (US \$ billion) 2012	Market share (%) 2012
1	China	102.0	9.5
2	Germany	83.8	7.8
3	United States	83.7	7.8
4	United Kingdom	52.3	4.9
5	Russian Federation	42.8	4.0
6	France	38.1	3.5
7	Canada	35.2	3.3
8	Japan	28.1	2.6
9	Australia	27.6	2.6
10	Italy	26.2	2.4

(£67bn) in spending in 2012, surpassing top spenders Germany and the United States (UNWTO, 2013b). But this is understandably due to their large population, relaxed travel regulations and rising disposable incomes (UNWTO, 2013b). When it comes to inbound visitor spending, cities in sub-Saharan Africa, however, do not feature significantly (GDCI, 2013). According to the 2013 Global Destinations Cities Index (GDCI), Johannesburg and Lagos were the only two sub-Saharan African cities to feature in their top 10 list of destinations that received the highest amount in visitor spending. Johannesburg received \$2.7bn and Lagos received \$0.9bn, while Nairobi which was ranked number 8 in the previous year's report (Hedrick-Wong, 2012) dropped out of the top 10 rankings for 2013 (GDCI, 2013). In Table 2.2, inbound visitors to Accra from London were the largest tourist spending market, with Lagos coming in second. Tourists from the North American market (New York and Washington) also spent significantly, spending \$42m in the city. These statistics though compelling unfortunately do not factor in the possibility that many of these inbound tourists could have been Ghanaians living in the Diaspora who are returning home. This would have been crucial to the results but it unfortunately omits a key indicator for assessing non-Ghanaian tourist expenditure versus Ghanaian tourist expenditure, which would have been vital in effective target marketing and effective

Table 2.2 Inbound visitors spending in Accra  
Source: Adapted from MasterCard, 2012

Inbound region	Number of tourists	Expenditure (\$)
London	117,000	183,000,000
Lagos	118,000	85,000,000
Amsterdam	75,000	53,000,000
New York	30,000	21,000,000
Washington	30,000	21,000,000

destination development. Though these expenditure amounts are not as high as those received by Nairobi or Johannesburg in the GDCI report, the Nigerian market and North America are providing at least parts of Ghana with significant amounts in tourist receipts. So overall, tourist expenditure is contributing significantly to the GDP of many sub-Saharan Africa countries. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to sub-Saharan Africa in 2011 was estimated at almost \$40bn (WTTC, 2011). There are many forms of tourist spending, and channels through which such spending flows. Tourists may invest in the construction of schools, the maintenance of heritage sites in the area of visitation and even donate money to governmental projects geared towards the construction and repair of drainage systems in poor areas; a feat that local tourism boards may lack the necessary funds to achieve. Another important avenue for tourist spending is evidently consumption expenditure during their stay, much of which will go on accommodation, food and transport, but beyond this shopping is one of the most popular and important forms of expenditure (Murphy *et al.*, 2011).

For centuries travelers have been collecting mementos and keepsakes of their travel experiences to remind them of their journeys, a practice that has now evolved into the giant tourist retail shopping industry that we know of today. Souvenirs have also evolved from mere objects into diversified tourist products that are now in high demand and creating impact in the tourism industry (Wilkins, 2011). Because of this many destinations have developed and promoted unique shopping opportunities especially for their visitors. Tourism retailing, shopping and the purchasing of souvenirs has now

become an important part of tourist expenditure and a key motivator for travel (Coles, 2004; Collins-Kreiner and Zins, 2011; Murphy *et al.*, 2011). As mentioned, the bulk of work done on retail tourism, specifically on tourist souvenirs and purchases has focused on the types of souvenirs purchased (Coles, 2004), their functions (Sutherland-Addy *et al.*, 2008), tourist shopping satisfaction (Wong and Wan, 2013) and the nature of meaning within the souvenirs themselves (Sutherland-Addy *et al.*, 2008; Collins-Kreiner and Zins, 2011). According to Coles (2004) the relationship between tourism, shopping and retailing had not received as much attention in the literature as souvenir purchases themselves. An increased focus needed to be placed on tourism shopping and retailing as well as on the retailer experience during the commercial encounter (Coles, 2004); an area that this study explores. But much has been done since then and the significance of tourism shopping and souvenirs is now being realized. More recently, the focus has shifted into purchase motivations or why tourists purchase the mementos and souvenirs that they do (Wilkins, 2011). Understanding purchase motivations is very significant in helping destinations to tailor and develop their tourist product effectively. Most of this work has been concentrated outside of sub-Saharan Africa. Subsequent to my own study, however, there has been further work on the value of souvenirs or arts and crafts to tourism development in Ghana (Owusu-Mintah, 2013; Acquah, 2013). One important message in Acquah's (2013) study was that although crafts were an extremely valuable asset to the tourist industry, a more comprehensive strategy needed be developed to improve the overall finishing of craft products and improve their current performance in the tourist market. However these two studies did not explore the African American segment of the tourist market, which further highlights the importance, originality and the contributions of this study .

Shopping expenditure and overall tourist spending in the destination form part of tourism's ability to spread money amongst those who previously did not have access to such financial capital, such as those who deal in informal trade and the handicraft sector who are a key focus of this study. As noted by Archer, Cooper and Ruhanen (2005:79), this potential scattering of wealth is "a considerable spatial redistribution of spending power, which has a significant impact on the economy of the destination". For instance,

wealthy tourists may spend within a destination that is not so wealthy, thereby injecting foreign currency and money amongst local traders with whom they come into contact. The beneficiaries of this tourist expenditure include handicraft men and women who often rely on such tourist expenditure to survive. They are situated not only in the immediate areas of economic transaction, but also on the outskirts. In the following sub-section, we discuss how current literature has illustrated the impacts that the Diaspora have had on homeland tourism development in general and in Ghana.

## **2.5 Diaspora Tourism, Homeland Development and Local Livelihoods**

Diaspora tourism, which is one aspect of contemporary international tourism, is defined as the return movement of Diaspora communities to their homelands or “the scattering of people over space and transnational connections between people and places” (Blunt and Dowling, 2006: 199). This tourist segment has become an important component of international mobility (as will be discussed further in the following chapters) as the return movements of forcefully dispersed Africans (Bruner, 1996; Ebron, 1999; Finley, 2001; Timothy and Teye, 2004; Jordan, 2007), the mobility of the Jewish Diaspora (Parfitt and Semi, 2002; Ioannides and Ioannides, 2004), the return of Jews to Israel and the religious migrations such as Muslims on a pilgrimage to Mecca to engage in temporary encounters have all featured significantly in Diaspora research literature.

There have been many notable contributions to the Diaspora tourism body of knowledge over the past couple of years. Recently, work on Diaspora tourism has explored some interesting themes. Studies have delved into how language study courses, as a component of language tourism, is being used a medium through which visitors (specifically students) are reconnecting culturally and emotionally with their homelands (Drozdowski, 2011). Yankholmes and Akyeampong's (2010) study on tourists' perceptions of tourism development in Ghana provided an interesting spin on identity and heritage when it comes to Diaspora visits to the homeland. In their study, Danish tourists visiting Danish-Osu (a former colonial town in Accra) had expressed the sentiment that they considered the area and its most famous castle (Christiansborg) as

part of *their* heritage as well. It was not just the dispersed populations of slavery, but also the descendents of colonial powers that could identify with the colonized location and have a sense of belonging to its relics. Other studies have explored the contestation of heritage by Diasporas and the local community and specifically how they perceive the usage or identity of relics of colonialism or slavery and how this is affecting tourism development (Sarmiento, 2010; Yankholmes *et al.*, 2010; Gijanto, 2011; Best and Phulgence, 2013). Although these studies discuss elements that are also explored in this study, none of them examine expenditure impacts on informal sector livelihoods as a result of the heritage tourism.

The body of literature on Diasporas in general and how they relate to one another is extensive, but there is little on the supply side in tourism discourse. Literature on touristic activities of the black American market about their attitudes, motivations, decision making and preferences was limited by the 1990s (Philipp, 1994). It was later on in the year that Agarwal and Yochun (1999) sought to investigate patterns in spending behaviour of domestic tourists in the U.S., including African Americans, based on their race. Their study concluded that race had no significant bearing on spending patterns and that income was the main determinant among the categorized ‘black’, ‘white’ and ‘other’ tourists. Though based in North American, this was an important contribution in the African Diaspora tourism discourse, as it explored tourism discourse, expenditure and ethnicity in a single study. Though there is some interest in how African American tourists function in their home countries, there was little interest on how they impact on their homelands on the African continent, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Not much had changed on this by the 21<sup>st</sup> century when it was still said that “current scholarly literature on African American *tourism* is miniscule” (Butler *et al.*, 2002:1032).

And though this focus has now grown, some of the more recent studies on African American tourism, with the exception of those done by Reed (2010) and Gbedema (2012), still centre on their travel experiences in North America and how slavery and segregation has merged with the tourism industry there to impact on identity and

heritage (Alderman, 2013; Algeo, 2013; Small, 2013). But in spite of these studies, according to Alderman (2013), the African American experience still remains marginalized. Given this, it is scarcely surprising that there had been little work at this point on the impacts in Africa of African American tourists on livelihoods via their expenditure patterns especially in relation to retail and souvenir shopping. This further reiterates the significance of this study. The next section discusses some of the Diaspora literature in more detail, focusing on the themes of Diaspora tourism and homeland development and the impacts of such tourism on local livelihoods.

### **2.5.1 Defining Diaspora, Key Authors and Key Themes**

The term Diaspora has expanded considerably over the past couple of decades moving from a specialized definition that related to a specific group of people to a more broad relationship between a group of migrants and their place of origin (Bakewell, 2008). One definition is that it is the “global dispersal of people of African heritage” (Timothy and Teye, 2004: 113). Hamilton (2007:10) describes the modern African Diaspora as a “global aggregate of actors and subpopulations, differentiated in social and geographical space, yet exhibiting a connectedness based on shared history of common experiences, conditioned by and within a dynamic world ordering system”. This view fits well with the African American who has a shared history with their homeland but certain complexities exist in terms of their identification and situation within such definitions or views. This is because of their dual identities as Africans as well as Americans and the inherent issues that such identities can have on their homeland’s local population who are considered indigenously African. This is another issue which although it has been touched on in other studies (Mwakikagile, 2007; Reed, 2010) has not explored such themes through the channel of expenditure or shopping. There is a great awareness now of how identity and ethnicity affects Diaspora populations but there is nonetheless still a big gap in the literature on how heritage, identity and their consequences have translated into tourism development in home countries. Current definitions for the African Diaspora have sought both to embrace the dual identity issues outlined above and to address larger concerns in heritage and identity - which are important. The term



‘African Diaspora’ in its more contemporary applications, materialized around the mid-twentieth century and served the dual academic purpose of acting as a diplomatic tool for calling attention to the colonial heritage of Africa and its resultant Diaspora, and also served as an expression through which ethnic transatlantic discourse could be critically investigated (Patterson and Kelley, 2000). As a result of this, literature on the African Diaspora is quite developed (Bakewell, 2008). Key themes in the literature on the African Diaspora include discussions on the contestations of heritage (Best and Phulgence, 2013), the social experiences of ancestral Diasporas visiting their homelands (Arthur, 2010; Reed, 2010; Gbedema, 2012), the meaning of ‘home’ and a sense of belonging in the homeland (Blunt and Dowling, 2006) and the experiences of the African Diaspora in Europe (Cohen, 2008) and in South America (Pinho, 2008) as well as on the experiences of the migrant African Diaspora (Abdile and Pirkkalainen, 2011). Of these, the studies by Reed (2010), Arthur (2010) and Gbedema (2012) relate to the themes of this study in the sense that they all discuss the experiences of African American tourists during homeland visits, but they also do not focus on the impact of tourists on traders specifically.

A review of the literature has shown that in most cases only brief references are made regarding Diaspora-trader commercial exchanges and the specific financial impacts or the significance of these encounters are not explored. Of particular significance once again are the studies by Acquah (2013) and Owusu-Mintah, (2013) for the following reasons. Both authors interviewed international tourists and local craftsmen and explored the types of crafts sold as well as the types of crafts purchased by the tourists. Like this study, Owusu-Mintah (2013) interviewed sellers in the Arts Centre, and addressed some of the production and sale challenges that they faced there. Acquah (2013) to some extent, explores the impacts of the commercial exchange by identifying the kind of craft products purchased as well as briefly assessing tourist spending behavior, their purpose of visit and where they visit. But as already mentioned important elements such as sifting out and assessing the African American portion of the tourists, assessing how traders spend the money gained from craft sales and following the tourist dollar through the commodity chain are missing. As this study is on African Americans,

the focus here is on studies on this particular group. The focus on the African American in academia, though not as extensive as the African Diaspora in general, has “gathered momentum in recent times” (Palmer, 2000:27). Studies of this group have produced various theories, debates and issues that have played a significant role in enhancing its interest in academia (Flores, 2009). Geo-social shifts and ‘circulatoriness’, (Hamilton, 2007), dual identities, and how one’s sense of home and belonging have transcended dispersion (Blunt and Dowling, 2006) are some of the concepts that academics have identified as playing a significant part in the experiences and actions of African Americans. For instance, Blunt and Dowling discussed how the African Diaspora had still maintained a level of African identity in spite of the schismatic effects that the Middle Passage had on their psyche and how this has maintained strength throughout the centuries.

Evidently most of the African American Diaspora is rooted in the history of African slavery and colonization, which resulted in the dispersal of large numbers of continental Africans across Europe and the Americas (Curtin, 1969 & 1995; Lovejoy, 1997 & 2000). The body of work on this area is vast and the history is well known. Selected important works on the transatlantic slave trade, West African colonial rule, African American heritage and slavery include those by Michael Crowder (1968), Philip Curtin (1995), Paul Lovejoy (2000) and Robert Law (2006). Such research on the history of African enslavement, the controversies surrounding the actual number of Africans who were enslaved or the impact and influences of the African population during these periods provides the foundation stones for subsequent studies on Diaspora relations and provided valuable and compelling views from which other authors could build and develop on. The study of African Diaspora relations involves analysis of how African Diasporas – including those originating from slavery or other forced expulsions as well as those who have willingly left their land of origin to find jobs, relocate etc – relate to one another and to their homelands. One theme has been about how African Diaspora heritage has been reflected in their travels and experiences in the African Continent and particularly in Ghana (Reed, 2010; Gijanto, 2011; Alderman, 2013). Studies in this area have accumulated around a locus of homeland return (Stefansson, 2004; Schramm,

2004); issues of identity, heritage, concepts of homeland (Blunt, 2002; Safran, 2007; Hammond, 2004; Skrbiš, 2007); authenticity within the experience (Collins-Kreiner and Olsen, 2004) and the influence of DNA tracing on homeland return, which is discussed further on in the chapter. The theme of how such relations might be understood or analyzed through the lens of patterns of consumption of particular types of products which resonate with perceived heritage has not been investigated however.

A subsequent focus has been on development and how the African Diaspora are functioning, investing and thus making an economic impact on the tourism scene in Africa . For example Adams Jr *et al.*, (2008), Heath (2009), Karuhanga (2009) and Alex-Assensoh (2010) have all demonstrated how the African Diaspora are willing to and do make financial (remittances) and non-financial (knowledge, technology) contributions to the African continent, while Timothy and Coles (2004) have identified the unsettling realities that accompany homecomings for both migrant and ancestral returnees. A strong conclusion from these accumulated works has been that in spite of these challenges, African Diasporas are still making significant contributions to homeland development .

Diaspora development generally has however seen considerable coverage in literature. There is also rich literature on non-African Diasporas and their significant contributions to their homelands; For instance, the state of Kerala in India and its 'Ente Naadu' programme was aimed at inviting its Kerala Diaspora to invest in numerous touristic projects in their homeland (Thaindian News, 2008a). It was projected that the positive feedback from the programme would produce around Rs.10 billion (around US\$16.4) in investments in tourism related infrastructure amongst others (Thaindian News, 2008c). Other ventures include the state of Kerala, which was considering setting up a company purposely for investment by NRIs (non-resident Indians) into ventures that would produce returns for their Diaspora (Thaindian News, 2008b). In Nepal and the Himalayas, tourist expenditure helped the conservation of heritage monuments of religious significance by going towards their structural upkeep (Shah and Gupta, 2000). A Diaspora symposium in New York in 2001 was held for the Dominica Diaspora and

explored the various developmental opportunities available in their homeland (Fontaine, 2002). Lew and Wong (2002) in their study *Tourism and the Chinese Diaspora* showed how the model Diaspora, after achieving success abroad retained a strong patriotism or attachment to their homeland. It was this connection that made them return to aid in development, to invest and to create job opportunities to stimulate the economy. In more recent studies, Iorio and Corsale (2013) discussed the homeland return of Transylvanian Saxons to Romania and how this had impacted on their sense of belonging there. By maintaining house properties and making regular visits to the homeland, these Diaspora kept a strong attachment to their homeland and aided in development. Though these are just some of the instances in which Diasporas have contributed to their homelands, it reiterates the value of their connection to home and the potential that that connection has to make significant contributions to one's home country, whether they are of the new migrant Diaspora or the old descendant Diaspora of slavery.

## **2.5.2 African Diaspora Investments in the Homeland: Debates and Issues**

### **2.5.2.1 Debates**

The potential for African Diaspora investments to promote homeland development is debatable and this has created a divide between academics and policy makers. On the one hand are studies which, for example, study the return of the Diaspora to their homeland, and argue that subsequent Diaspora investment is a development agent as it brings various forms of capital directly to rural communities (eg Alex-Assensoh, 2010). On the other hand are studies by Bracking and Sachikonye (2007) and Mercer *et al.*, (2009) which argue that though remittances are a form of investment and do benefit the needy, this is not always the case as financial benefits from the African Diaspora do not always reach the most vulnerable or the poorest. Significant attention has also been given to the emergence of Diaspora associations, contributions and resources raised by the Diaspora to develop their homeland communities, as many studies have confirmed its potential to drive development (Beauchemin and Schoumaker, 2009; Heath, 2009). Economists have also argued along similar lines that the socio-economic importance of

these investments has both macro and micro economic significance to the economies of developing countries (Ribas, 2008). Remittances which *have* been one of the most mentioned areas when it comes to African Diaspora investments contribute considerably to a country's revenue inflows (Adams Jr, Cuecuecha and Page, 2008; Karuhanga, 2009) and also constitute an invaluable communication tool between the migrant and non migrant as it is often their main form of contact (Suksomboon, 2007). These financial benefits, as one of the most absorbent forms of capital are extremely valuable to homelands. Academics in transnational studies in human geography also point to Diaspora associations from developing countries, especially hometown associations, as contributors to development in their homeland through their philanthropic links (Johnson 2004; Kabki *et al.*, 2004; Heath, 2009). However, there has been less research on investments by ancestral Diaspora than on migrant Diaspora. This type of research has mainly focused on the forms of investment from the Diaspora such as technology, human capital and politics (Alex-Assensoh, 2010; Johnson, 2004). It must be noted that these non economic contributions have secondary effects that are economic. Some academics are skeptical about the potential contribution of Diaspora associations abroad to development in Africa, however. Mercer *et al.*, (2009) for example, argue from the findings of their research, conducted with the Diaspora associations in Cameroon and Tanzania, that contributions from Diaspora groups are fewer, as their development roles are practiced unprofessionally and suggest a "weaker network" link to their homeland. There have also been non-academic articles and reports about individual African Diaspora efforts, especially, by celebrities, to assist some poor and rural communities in their homelands, suggesting that this particular phenomenon that helps local development and the poor is on the increase (Suksomboon, 2007; Adams Jr, Cuecuecha and Page, 2008; Karuhanga, 2009).

The developmental role of investments by Diaspora tourists has also been a topic of concern and controversy. Mwakikagile (2007) argued that the overreliance on investment can be dangerous because it can create a dependency on foreign assistance and resources that is likely to cripple in the near future. In spite of this, he also recognized the need for investment in specific vital infrastructural areas of a developing

country's economy. While these concerns cannot be disregarded, and these debates will no doubt continue, it is arguable that investments made by the African American have a particular uniqueness and sustainability (as mentioned in Chapter one) that other forms of investment do not have.

### **2.5.2.2 What Motivates African Diaspora Homeland Investments**

For the past two decades scholars of African Diaspora have made significant efforts to answer the question of what motivates them to invest in their homelands. In this respect we are not discussing profit motivated investments, but rather philanthropic investments made with the intention of improving local people's livelihoods. These studies have suggested the following motivations: investments serving as a development tool (Ajayi, 2006); the availability of disposable income (Mazrui, 1987); the ability to trace one's ancestry by DNA testing to a particular country (Goffe, 2009) and encouragement by governments of their homeland (Pratt and Okigbo, 2004).

Investments by African Americans in particular are also acting as a communication tool between them and the continent. (Ajayi, 2006). And because of their emotional attachment to their homelands, they are also seen as more inclined to make a connection with the continent than other international tourists (Agunias and Newland, 2012). Other factors that have made them a key tourist market have been their disposable income as tourists. The 2009 World Travel Market and Euromonitor International Global Trends Report noted the value of so - called Roots Tourism for the African continent; especially in the case of President Barack Obama's visit to Ghana (WTM Euromonitor, 2009). African American tourists are considered an affluent group (Mazrui 1987; Bruner, 1996) with the average tourist having an average annual income of over \$30,000 (GPVS, 2007). According to one estimate, they command US\$400 billion in disposable spending (Timothy and Teye, 2004).

Many African Americans with spending power have invested in Africa. Talk show host Oprah Winfrey for instance built a girl's school in South Africa in 2007 worth \$40m

(BBC, 2007). The ability to trace one's ancestry through DNA testing has played an even more significant role in motivating African Diasporas and African American to travel to specific African places and invest (Salas *et al.*, 2005; Asomaning, 2006; Davis, 2007; Mahajan, 2008; Goffe, 2009). Celebrities such as talk show host Oprah Winfrey and actors Whoopi Goldberg and Chris Rock have all undertaken the genealogical journey of identifying their African heritage (Davis, 2007; Mahajan, 2008). Comedian Chris Rock traced his lineage to the Udembe people of Northern Cameroon; 'Roots' actor LeVar Burton and actor Forest Whitaker discovered that they had roots in Nigeria; civil rights leader Andrew Young also traced his ancestry to the Mende people of Sierra Leone (Goffe, 2009). Having traced his ancestral roots to the *Mende* people of Sierra Leone, Diasporas like celebrity - actor *Isaiah Washington* was granted full citizenship by the country and as a result has contributed significantly to the country by establishing a foundation and setting up an elementary school in his homeland aimed at improving the livelihoods of its citizens (Kamara, 2010). Another example is that of Myron Jackson, the Director of the Virgin Islands State Historic Preservation Office, who traced his roots to *Tumu*, a town in the Upper West Region of Ghana (Asomaning, 2006). Mr. Jackson was accepted by a Ghanaian family that he apparently had connections with and now makes occasional trips to Ghana (Asomaning, 2006).

The organization of forums, projects, seminars and workshops in particular have formed a further launch pad for the initiation and encouragement of Diaspora travel to the homeland and the proposal for investments. Many African leaders and governments have made considerable efforts to develop and to solidify the Diaspora-African economic relationship. For example Zambia's tourism industry has encouraged its Diaspora to return to invest in the country, as a response to the global economic crises as well as a means to contribute to the economy's development (Lusaka Times, 2009). In Ghana, the fifth African American summit held in the country in 1999, which was attended by numerous high-ranking officials and by two thousand African Americans and tourists, was one of the numerous efforts made by local governments to promote tourism development there (Pratt and Okigbo, 2004). During the early part of the twentieth century, the Ethiopian government also made the call to African Americans to

settle in Ethiopia and invest. (Alex-Assensoh, 2010). This endeavour was ultimately successful; as in addition to bringing in almost a hundred African Americans in the 1930's, it also brought many skilled and educated individuals who not only helped to develop the country, but aided Ethiopia during the Italian invasion (Alex-Assensoh, 2010). One of the incentives for African American emigration to Ethiopia was land acquisition. This was also one of the incentives given to African Americans by the Ghanaian government to encourage others to emigrate and help develop the motherland. The land was developed into a community called *Fihankra*, where African American tourists-turned residents have now settled (Mwakikagile, 2005). Residents are involved in development projects such as educating the youth, running schools and managing seaside hotels (see Fihankra International, 2013).

Estimates vary on how many African Americans currently reside in Ghana; some estimates suggest 5,000 (Coates, 2006), others estimate 1,000 residents (see Mwakikagile, 2005). Recently though unconfirmed sources have put the number at almost 20,000 (Living Wealth, 2011). African American investment in this sense goes beyond the touristic experience, as many tourists have now become permanent residents in Ghana and are spending and investing in the country in numerous ways. Other efforts and perhaps the most popular include the adoption of the *Emancipation Day* celebrations, as previously explained, which also acts as an avenue for investment (Hasty, 2002). It encourages the Diaspora not only to share in the commemoration of Pan-Africanism and the abolition of slavery but also more importantly to invest. The process has not been without criticism. For example, Shain (1999) argued that such initiatives are a form of manipulation and sentimental power that home governments use to steer or maintain loyalty of their Diaspora populations. Some African Americans have agreed and felt they had been taken advantage of or only seen as a source of finance.

There are other factors that are argued to have an effect on the decisions of Diaspora tourists to invest in their homelands. According to Gillespie, Riddle and Sturges (1999:625-626) these include "Ethnic advantage.... homeland orientation....and



homeland altruism”<sup>6</sup>. Others include a sense of personal obligation to ensure that their home countries succeed in pressurizing governments to speed up such developments (Shain, 1999) and the promise of economic and political stability (Arthur 2000). These authors argue how African Diaspora have sometimes expressed an interest and desire to return to their homelands provided there was economic and political stability in that country and that they themselves were financially sound<sup>7</sup>. The importance of economic stability has been emphasized by Gillespie *et al.*, (1999) who argue that Diasporas would be unwilling or unlikely to invest in their homelands in the midst of unpredictable investment climates which were likely to deter even large investors. The risks of Diaspora investing in developing countries that are commonly burdened with various and obvious economic woes is also emphasized by Mwakikagile (2007) An example of these issues can be found in the outcomes of the *Ghana @ 50 celebrations* in 2007 of the Marcus Garvey-founded Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) forum, in which highly relevant and controversial issues pertaining to opportunities for a Ghana-Diaspora partnership aiding in the development of the country were discussed. Contributions to the forum by African Americans highlighted the Diaspora’s trans-patriotic responsibility to aid in the development of the country and the continent as a whole. However, Diaspora developmental involvement was criticized by other African American contributors who believed that inadequate infrastructure or an unstable economy or government would destabilize any progress that Diaspora involvement would make and that it was necessary that a country’s government attain economic stability to support any further progress (Commander, 2007).

Social incompatibility can also affect Diaspora relations which involve local investments. Social and cultural misunderstandings between the ‘foreign’ investor and the local community can easily cause friction during development debates (Sofield, 1996). Coates (2006) provides accounts of African Americans who relocated to Ghana to establish businesses and were faced with many challenges. In one instance, an

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<sup>6</sup> It is relevant to point out that Gillespie’s study focused on non- African Diaspora communities within the United States that were of Armenian, Cuban, Palestinian and Iranian origin.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur’s (2000) study centred on African Diaspora Migrants as opposed to African American Diasporas. The conceptual basis on which the African American desire to return to the homeland rests in comparison to migrant motivations

investor found it frustrating dealing with the 'laid-back' Ghanaian attitude to work (p.2) which inevitably led to a strained professional relationship. Tensions that can arise between the Diaspora and the locals derive from many different issues, not only economic ones, as will be demonstrated in the next section.

### **2.5.3 The Controversies of Homeland Return and Homeland Development**

The experience of Diaspora return frequently involves difficulties in cultural and transnational connections with indigenous citizens which has affected their experiences (Skinner, 1982; Bruner, 1996; Ebron, 1999; Finley, 2001; Richards S., 2002; Timothy and Teye, 2004; Richards, 2005; Mwakikagile, 2007). Timothy and Coles (2004) in particular have commented on these contradictions in the experiences of the Diasporas' homeland return. As they note, "conditions do not remain stagnant in the homeland, so it is common for hyphenated peoples to have travel experiences in the motherland that are very different from their expectations" (p.293). There is a multifaceted set of social phenomena which impact on the relationship between the Diaspora and tourism. These can include complexities that arise from Diasporas of various homelands being involved in complex host interactions and the controversies or misconceptions in dialogue (Skinner, 1982). The multidimensionality of Diaspora tourism in comparison with other forms of mobility also exists in the subjective nature of an attached desire to return to a land of origin (Skrbiš, 2007) and the oppressive occurrences from a colonial heritage that have spurred these Diasporas to return to the African continent. For example in Ghana, African Americans have acquired unique appellations of their own and are commonly referred to as *Obroni*, a native term often used to describe a stranger or to identify an individual of Caucasian descent, a term which has also been documented extensively as being considered offensive amongst a majority of African Americans and the Diaspora community in general (Bruner, 1996; Ebron, 1999; Finley 2001).

Mazrui (1987) on a similar note provides insight into the dilemma of the Diaspora tourist and how they are also finding a level of polarization within their homelands. He examined the dual nature of African American tourists in which their marginalized

position in their home country has labeled them as an oppressed minority, whilst their location in North America has automatically labeled them as members of arguably the most powerful country in the world. Thus, their dual identities create a complex means of identification for host communities. Mazrui (1987:52) therefore pondered whether their status as visitors abroad would be as 'members of the oppressed minority...or...citizens of the privileged society'. As previously mentioned, the additionally complex ancestral linkage of a descendant tourist and an indigenous host in which a shared bloodline is inherent in both individuals also offers unique challenges that must be identified (Pinho, 2008), although some studies have claimed that western-grooming and the schism of the forced dispersal of the slave trade has diluted this sense of Africanism (see Mohan and Zack-Williams, 2002; Mwakikagile, 2005).

In spite of the varying views and the socio - economic constraints discussed, the general consensus in literature is that African Americans have invested significantly in their homelands: financially, socially and technologically. These investments take various forms and flow through various channels.

#### **2.5.4 Handicraft Traders and Local Livelihoods**

Apart from payments made to a local tour operator, accommodation, food costs, transportation costs and entrance fees, the only other significant form of monetary exchange that benefits the local community exists when tourists encounter traders. But there has been much debate about the vulnerability of the livelihoods of sellers in the informal sector. Some of the issues addressed have mainly been the constraints and challenges faced by local traders, including their clashes with government over vending space (Hansen, 2004; Radhakrishnan, 2007; Gyebi, 2009; Maguire, 2009). But more important has been the livelihood debates on whether local traders are benefiting at all from tourism development and receiving a liveable share of tourist expenditure (Ellis, 1998). These debates have specifically sought to explore whether the vulnerable have access to adequate levels of financial capital, human capital, social capital, physical capital and natural capital (Ashley and Carney, 1999; Brock and Coulibaly, 1999; DFID,

1999). The livelihoods approach focuses on the sustainability of people's livelihoods and places those most in need at the centre of research, and analyses those variables necessary to sustain or propel their development (DFID, 1999; Ellis, 2000; Carney, 2003). The approach has also been specifically used in tourism studies, and its initial use in this respect is particularly associated with the works of Ashley (eg Ashley, 2006). It facilitates research which explores how tourism has both direct and indirect, and positive and negative effects on livelihoods. In relation to this particular conceptual framework, the key theme for this study is how the livelihoods of sellers in the informal tourism sector and their access to various forms of capital are highly dependent on touristic activity

In the case of craftsmen, handicraft sales play a prominent financial role within the industry and are a significant source of earnings for many countries, including Ghana. In Ethiopia, for example, tourism-related handicraft sales are estimated to produce as much as \$12.7 million per annum and over half of this expenditure is injected into vulnerable artisanal handiwork (Eiligmann, 2009; Mitchell and Ashley, 2009). According to Mitchell and Coles (2009), expenditure on crafts is extremely valuable to the tourism industry in Ethiopia because their report found that more than 50% of expenditure on craft products went to vulnerable traders there. Significant export revenues are also generated from handicrafts in Ghana, which produced over \$11m worth of exports in 2002 (ITC, 2005). Its potential as a vehicle in pro-poor tourism initiatives was also realized by the Ghanaian tourism government as well as any future initiatives to re-prioritize the industry's treatment of tourism and handicrafts (Tuffuor, 2008). According to O'Connor (2006:1-2), "through the purchase of locally made items, tourists create and promote employment for sustainable economic development, improve livelihoods of artisans and promote women and disadvantaged segments of society, for whom other employment may be unavailable".

Outside of sub-Saharan Africa, other developing nations value artisanship and crafts as a significant resource for earnings. For instance, Tunisia's crafts industry contributed significantly to the country's GDI as it averaged 3.8% of the country's gross domestic

income, and employed over 300,000 of the currently employed, acted as a supportive source of income, as well as providing each family unit with over US\$ 2,000 each year in earnings (Richard, 2007). Laos's handicraft industry contributed over \$4 million, from which 40% acted as a source of financial capital for local workers and in which the average allocentric tourist is said to have spent over \$30 on crafts (Ashley, 2006; cited in Eiligmann, 2009). The Indian handicraft industry export earnings exceeded \$1bn (WTO, 2008) from considerable demand in the global 'north'. The Columbian crafts production industry provided the country with US\$ 400 million annually and also provided craftsmen with a decent monthly income of up to \$510 (Richard, 2007). But it is the USA which consistently dominates the handicraft consumption market (Jena, 2010). In many areas of the world, the art of handicraft production has come second only to agriculture when it comes to the employment of locals in the rural communities (Hnatow, 2009). But tourism actors such as tour operators also play a vital role in how tourist expenditure on local artisans is spent.

## **2.6 The Role of the Tour Operator**

*“To understand tourism's economic outcome in a given location requires an understanding of the structure of this system, and of the events, forces and agents that shape it” Cornelissen (2005:4)*

A tour operator is defined as “a company which negotiates with hotels, transportation companies, and other suppliers and combines these vacation components into a package tour” (Sheldon, 1986:352). Key themes in literature related to tour operators have centred on their importance to the tourism process (Mathieson and Wall, 1992; Cornelissen, 2005), their cooperation with other destinations, how they maneuver product management and development and their strategies to gain competitive advantage in their travel market place (Dale, 2009), good practices, customer relations, the impacts of their presence online and in social media (Senders, Govers and Neuts, 2013), their role in the distribution channel (Buhalis, 2000; TOI, 2004), destination sustainability (Carey and Gountas, 1997; Gountas and Gilbert, 1997) and climate change

(Zots, 2010). Though currently the sustainability debate is dominating (TOI, 2004; Tixier, 2009), one particular aspect of their importance is their vertical and horizontal integration which has enabled operators to merge with other tourist serving companies, thereby increasing their reach and market share, giving them considerable power in the industry (Buhalis, 2000) and a particular reverence in the psyche of the tourist. This is because tour operators have the ability to 'negotiate' tourism processes in a way that would be most cost effective and beneficial to tourists (Ioannides, 1998). According to Sheldon (1986:349), the tour operator's has the ability to negotiate certain touristic costs for their clients by negotiating with suppliers to reduce their costs. For instance, the airline sector and hotel sector constitute areas in which negotiations have been made to reduce the cost incurred by foreign operators conducting business in developing countries. Operators also provide security and discounts for tourists on trips that would on many occasions cost more when arranged as an individual (Enoch, 1996).

There are two key theoretical standpoints when it comes to the tour operator in academic literature. The first is that they are vital to the touristic experience (Bastakis, Buhalis and Butler, 2004) because they are one of the varied stakeholders who are responsible for the commencement, progression and finalization of the touristic process (Mathieson and Hall, 1992; Cornelissen, 2005). The second is that tour operators have considerable influence on tourist demand, client decisions, choices and motivations prior to and during the touristic experience (Cavlek, 2002; TOI, 2003). Because they are the main link between the tourist and the destination (Khairat and Maher, 2012), they have the power to saturate or dry-out specific areas thereby impacting considerably on the extent of tourism benefits gained by the local community (Shah and Gupta, 2000). This power has been executed through the strategic alteration, selection, exclusion or marketing of touristic imagery or destination imagery in various touristic paraphernalia (Ioannides, 1998; Cavlek, 2002). But some of these decisions to exclude or include are less strategic and more because operators are ensuring the safety of their clients and trying to protect themselves legally, and so omit specific locations that may pose a political threats (Ioannides, 1998; Cavlek, 2002). Unsatisfactory services provision in the destination (Ioannides, 1998) and aggressive selling techniques by hawkers are just some of the

issues that can cause operators to reconsider certain destinations or even omit areas of local commerce from itineraries for the convenience of their clients (Finley, 2001); a decision that decreases trader-tourist contact. Ultimately, the directional power of tour operators on tourists, causes them to either embark on a journey to a destination or to avoid it, ultimately resulting in the potential destination losing much needed tourist expenditure (Cavlek, 2002). Negative images of destinations can potentially impact on client decision making (McLellan and Foushee, 1983; Baloglu and Mangalolu, 2001; Grosspietsh, 2006). But these themes, which have all discussed the roles and responsibilities and power within the industry, have not focused on how tour operators affect Diaspora expenditure decisions and patterns, especially within the tourists' homeland. When it comes to how tour operator management African American tourists, apart from Authors such as Schramm (2010) who discussed how tour operators who handle African Americans are specialized and need a unique understanding of their client to give them the best experience possible, and Ebron (1999) who lead us through a tour experience of the Diaspora, or Butler *et al.*,(2002) who discussed the African American tourist and the travel agent, little is available on how tour operators manage African American tourists specifically. The need to focus on this is important because these tourists are a unique market with distinct motivations, preferences, historical influences and psychological influences (Osei-Tutu, 2007) that affect their management, making them all the more important to explore.

There is some evidence that tour operators do engage their clients with local tourism products because they are aware of the value of handicrafts to a destination, and consequently the holiday experience, and on many occasions encourage the production and patronage of locally produced and authentic handicrafts (Eiligmann, 2009). Operators have engaged with the local communities and patronized as much local activity as possible (Spenceley, 2007) and encouraged local participation and even gone to the extent of developing itineraries that are based on visiting local villages and eateries. But there are still concerns expressed by handicraft dealers and associations. For instance in the Gambia, handicraft dealers were concerned over the fact that tour operators had the bulk of tourist activity and that the tourism authority should provide a

means to redistribute tourists to their craft markets (Camara, 2010). So the literature has shown that Diasporas, especially African Diasporas are a valuable tourist segment, not only to the country in which they currently reside, but more importantly to their homelands; and that tourism has enabled them to travel back home to invest or make whatever contributions that they can. The African Diaspora is making contributions in several other sub-Saharan Africa countries that are famous for their heritage-legacy tours. These locations are discussed in the following chapters.



## **Chapter 3. Diaspora Tourism in sub-Saharan Africa**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter first contextualizes research on Diaspora tourism in West Africa by reviewing the nature of the scholarship . It then looks at Diaspora tourism as a growing entity of international tourism in several locations in sub-Saharan Africa with a known slave heritage tradition, and briefly examines the presence of the Diaspora tourist there and how they are making contributions there. As a way to set the scene for the following chapter, it then discusses the current state of tourism development in Ghana and the relationship between the informal trading sector and the tourism industry

Conducting research in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in West Africa is very important because as is discussed in Chapter two, research on Diaspora tourism in the region has not received as much attention as studies conducted outside of the region. But there has been an increase in the number of studies conducted on West Africa after this study was started. Studies have explored the potential of the Diaspora to drive tourism development and benefit vulnerable regions financially (Koutra and Diaz, 2013). There is still a larger focus on the benefits gained from international tourists in general (eg Acquah, 2013) rather than on Diaspora tourists specifically, and where research has focused on Diaspora tourists, it has failed to delve deep into how their expenditure impacts on local livelihoods. Up until recently, the majority of literature that has looked at expenditure during the encounter has been in the form of brief online articles posted on destination websites, but no thorough academic research has been done on expenditure patterns.

Some works in this area have only touched on spending briefly (Acquah, 2013; Owusu-Mintah, 2013), and the studies have been on a much smaller scale as compared to this study. Yet the point of interest on many occasions remains the relics of the slave trade as an aspect of dark tourism and how it is driving tourism development in the region

(Yankholmes and Akyeampong, 2010; Yankholmes *et al.*, 2010; Gbedema, 2012). So the next section looks at the slave heritage tradition in these areas and explores the extent to which research has highlighted the nature of Diaspora tourism.

### **3.2 The Slave Tour Heritage Tradition in Senegal, Nigeria, Benin and Gambia**

Countries such as the Gambia, Senegal, Benin and Nigeria were amongst some of the countries that served as sources of slave labour during the transatlantic slave trade. As a result they still possess relics and structures of the illegal and immoral trade today. The return of African American tourists - the descendants of that slave labour - to their ancestral motherlands has created a uniquely important market (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2003) for these sub-Saharan tourist destinations, which have tailored their tourism strategies and capitalized on their morbid history to accommodate the Diaspora tourist (Morgan *et al.*, 2003; Collins-Kreiner and Olsen, 2004; Pierre, 2009).

The slave trade as an aspect of dark tourism has been a subject of increased interest and avenue through which Diaspora tourism has on occasion been highlighted. It is an important area of focus as dark tourism sites are often one of the few tourism products that many vulnerable sub-Saharan countries have to offer. There have been a number of studies in this area. The main themes in dark tourism have been on the commoditization of death and disaster, tourists' fascination with visiting such sites - particularly of slavery and heritage, and the ethical, emotional and socio-cultural implications that accompany such a decision (eg Lennon and Foley, 2000). For example Dann and Seaton (2001) and Strange and Kempa (2003) discussed the controversies and intricacies of commoditizing heritage sites with a morbid history. Strange and Kempa (2003) discussed the Alcatraz and Robben Island prisons and how they could not be referred to absolutely as dark tourist sites, as various 'shades' of dark representation existed within their commoditization. Sarmiento (2010) discussed the role that a fort in Kenya played in tourism development there. Dark Studies done on West Africa have included Gijanto's, study on slave route sites in the Gambia (Gijanto, 2011), Yankholmes and Akyeampong's (2010) study on tourists' perception of dark tourism sites in Osu, Ghana

and Mowatt and Chancellor's (2011) study on visits to Cape Coast Castle in Ghana as well. Additional work on Ghana (Reed, 2010; Gbedema, 2012) has also used its slave heritage sites as a vehicle for exploration. This popularity is not just theoretical, but empirical as destination managers have thus turned dark sites, such as locations of imprisonment and torture, which have been marketed as heritage sites, into tourism hotspots and museums that serve the heritage tourist (Lennon and Foley, 2000; Strange and Kempa, 2003). Though the African American journey is recognized as a pilgrimage as well as legacy tour, the dark nature of its themes form the essence from which emotional narratives at the site of death are expressed. There are concerns about the dark nature of slavery and colonization and how this has hindered the degree to which tours of a macabre nature can be marketed, as some scholars have questioned its viability even as a tourism product (Dann and Seaton, 2001). Today African American tourists journey not only to Ghana, but to a number of other West African states to experience a sense of place, identity, heritage and an exploration of emotional narratives (Ebron 1999; Richards S., 2002; Teye and Timothy, 2004). The following section reviews some of these destinations and their appeal to the Diaspora tourist.

### **3.2.1 Senegal: Goree Island**

Though there are no statistics available, the presence of the Diaspora tourist in Senegal is considered 'small' (Crompton and Christie, 2003) but significant. Apart from the mainstream touristic activity, the African American presence in Senegal has included delegates attending the African American Summit (now known as the Leon H. Sullivan Summit), which Senegal hosted in 1995 and political journeys such as those made by President Barack Obama and a special visit by George W. Bush in 2003, which was discussed at length in an article by Medhurst (2011). In 2010, a delegation of African American personalities and officials, including Rev. Jesse Jackson, Julius Garvey and the president of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) visited Senegal and Goree Island to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary (VOA, 2010). All these efforts have been inherently geared to focusing resources and devising strategies for Africa's social and economic development.

Tourists who do visit Senegal mainly visit Goree Island as part of the homeland journey (Crompton and Christie, 2003; Wikle and Lightfoot (2014). Located 3 km off the main harbour of Dakar, Goree Island, now a UNESCO heritage site, is considered the country's most famous tourist attraction (Gritzner, 2005) and highly significant in the transatlantic slave trade<sup>8</sup>. Many of the tourism studies on Senegal have focused on Goree Island. Wikle and Lightfoot (2014) for example explored the landscape and dark history of Goree Island and how it has interpreted and is representing its history of slavery. The area holds homecoming ceremonies for African American tourists who ultimately help to market popular Diaspora attractions such as *Juffure* and the 'house of slaves'. *Juffure* is a fishing village internationally renowned for being hailed as the birth place of famous African American Author Alex Haley's ancestors. The 'house of slaves' is a museum and memorial house that is dedicated to the transatlantic slave trade.

The experiences of Diaspora tourists in Senegal here have been documented by a few writers, and these make occasional reference to interactions with traders whilst on heritage tours. Hartmen (2002) documented her experiences on Goree Island and that of other African American tourists while on a group tour. Her focus was on how the dynamics of heritage-related tourism, tourist identity and longing and African society affected one's perception of slavery. Although her descriptions focus more on psychological, emotional and observational experiences of these tourists, the interaction between tourists and local traders is although she does talk about an encounter with local boys close to the castle and their enthusiasm with welcoming back their long lost ancestors. Of particular significance to this study is Ebron's (1999) accounts of a tour to Senegal briefly notes several instances of tourist-trader interaction that occurred outside the walls of 'the house of slaves' in which tourists had become agitated by a group of hawkers that had suddenly approached them selling identical items. Another instance involved tourists (whilst on their way to their hotel) being 'welcomed' by trinket and

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<sup>8</sup> The level and degree of involvement of Goree Island in the transatlantic slave trade is often disputed. It has been denied that the island served as a slave shipping point and that 'only' a few hundred slaves were shipped from the island. This has however not diminished its popularity as a tourist destination.

souvenir vendors and again on their return from a visit to *Juffrey*. In all instances, the experience was viewed as ‘disruptive’ and often unwelcome as it expressed the “commercialization of homecoming” (Ebron,1999:918). These examples are particularly relevant in livelihood debates because they are suggestive of the impact of selling techniques on prospective buyers, and how Diasporas are often ‘put off’ by the presence of commerce in any emotional situation, resulting in local traders losing customers.

### **3.2.2 Benin: Porto Novo and Ouidah**

Porto Novo, the capital of Benin is particularly relevant as it offers several experiences in remnants of the transatlantic slave trade. The government of Benin has made considerable effort to develop a tourism campaign to attract African American tourists to the regions by creating a landscape dedicated to Ouidah’s role in the slave trade (Landry, 2011). This landscape comprises of a museum (The Ouida Museum of History; OMH), a fort, and the ‘Door of Non-Return’ as remnants of the slave trade. UNESCO-supported initiatives such as the ‘Ouidah 92; a Vodun<sup>9</sup> festival’ and the ‘slave route project’ are classic examples of the many Diaspora themed homeland attractions in sub-Saharan Africa. These two initiatives comprise of slave route walks, historical sites, memorials, shrines, ceremonies and structures that re-enact memory, encapsulate history and draw Americans of African descent to the region (Araujo, 2007;Pressley-Sanon, 2011; Araujo 2007).

Ouidah is another important tourist Diaspora location with a long history as a slave trading location (Law, 2001 & 2006; Araujo, 2010). During the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, almost a million slaves were said to have been captured and transported to the Americas and beyond from Ouidah (OMH, 2011; Law, 2004), making up 10% of the estimated 10-11 million slaves predicted to have been exported from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century to mid nineteenth century (Law, 2006). And because Ouidah’s role in the supply

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<sup>9</sup> The term *Vodun* (more commonly known as Voodoo) according to d’Almeida (2008:159) is “a word in the *Fon* language meaning “spirit”... “God” and “divine image”” and that the term “designates the deities as well as a set of religious beliefs, with their symbols, arts, prayers, chants, esoteric acts, rituals and ceremonies”

of slaves was highly significant, it is considered ‘the second most important point of embarkation’ (Law, 2006:2) not only for those enslaved but also as a point of return for freed or escaped slaves (d’Almeida, 2008). Though specific statistics regarding the ethnicity of visitors is not available for Ouidah, more general statistics indicate that of 2,174 visitors to Ouidah in 2003, 112 (5%) were from the ‘Americas’ (DTH/MCAT, 2004).

### **3.2.3 Gambia**

For a number of years, Gambia has traditionally been a popular tourist destination for Europeans seeking hedonistic activities. Like other African countries, they have sought to capitalize on their Diaspora by marketing their ancestral heritage. Being one of the West African locations that had one of the largest slave trade centres (Gritzner, 2005), Gambia’s transatlantic slave trade history and historical connection as the homeland of Alex Haley’s famous ancestor, ‘Kunta Kinte’, has also made it a popular draw for African American tourists as well. The Gambia does not receive as many international tourists as the other locations discussed above. In 2011, it received 106,000 international tourists (World Bank, 2013). It is estimated that the Diaspora market at one point accounted for almost 10% or 5000-6000 of the overall tourist market, which was around 50,000-60,000 tourist annually at that point (Silcox, 1993). Diaspora tourists who visit this region like the others discussed above immerse themselves in Diaspora related festivals and activities.

One particular festival of interest that the country hosts biannually is the ‘International Roots Festival’ in Banjul, where about 3000 African Americans visit to seek and re-connect with their African roots as well as to experience Gambia’s culture and heritage (Roots Gambia, 2011). The festival offers tourists the opportunity to purchase handicrafts at several handicraft markets (Roots Gambia, 2011) such as the Banjul Crafts Market, Brikama wood carvers market, BB Hostel Tourists Market, Serrekunda Batik Factory and Sunwing Craft Market (Access Gambia, 2013). Crafts markets such as these are also strategically located close to tourist hotels (GTA, 2010) and provide a

wide range of combined crafts work.

### **3.2.4 Nigeria: Arochukwu, Badgry and Gberefu Island**

Nigeria's involvement in the slave trade is considered less known than that of Ghana, Gambia, Senegal and Benin. Arochukwu, Badgry and Gberefu Islands are usually referred to as the main Diaspora hotspots for slave trade related history. It is known that Badgry in particular served as a shipping point, from which an estimated 550,000 African slaves were taken and transported to numerous locations in the Americas, Caribbean and Europe during the early 1500's. The Long Juju of Arochukwu (Cave Temple Complex), the Slave Memorial Museum in Ujari Village and Vlekete; one of the largest slave markets in West Africa are some of the famous heritage sites to draw the African Diaspora.

According to an interview with the Chairman of Badgry Local Government, Diaspora tourists do visit the region but in quite small numbers: only hundreds of African American tourists are said to visit Badgry annually (Interview, Hon. M. Dosu, Executive Chairman, Badgry Local Government, May 2012). Celebrities and students from the United States are said to top the list of visitors to heritage sites like the Badgry Museum (Businessday, 2012). Martin Luther King Junior attended the grand finale of the Black heritage festival in Badgry (Badgry Local Government, 2012). High profile African American visitors to Nigeria have included heavy weight boxing champion, Evander Holyfield and former Jackson Five member, Marlon Jackson, who both explored the region to trace their roots and explore the possibility of investing in the region (Vanguard, 2012; Walker, 2009). The prospective investment, involved a plan to develop a 'controversial' \$3.4bn slavery memorial museum and luxury resort in Badgry to attract more African Americans to the country through marketing the resort as a luxury tourist attraction and a historical tour. This was considered controversial because the project like other heritage related endeavours planned to incorporate dark tourism with leisure tourism and in a sense would have been an adulteration of painful history with modernity. But in spite of this, it was recognized that this project would

provide employment opportunities for Nigerians (Walker, 2009; Babatunde, 2011). Handicraft trader activity in Badagry revolves mainly around raffia mat selling which is made by local women in the community. These mats which are a favourite craft product purchased by African American tourists are sold at the Agbalata Market, Vlekete Slave Market and also around the slave heritage sites (Interview, Hon. M. Dosu, Executive Chairman, Badagry Local Government, May 2012). These four destinations are by no means the only locations that possess relics of the slave trade or are visited by African Americans, but they are the most popular and the African American presence there shows that considerable investments are being made or being considered. So the heritage market of these locations is at the very least exposing these locations to a valuable market with the means to make considerable investments as is already being done.

### **3.3 Setting the Scene: Tourism Development in Ghana**

The body of knowledge on tourism development in Ghana has increased somewhat over the past couple of years. The nature of the literature has generally given an overview of tourism development in Ghana with no specific focus on the benefits of Diaspora tourists during their commercial encounters. The impacts of tourism to the country and especially to Elmina and Cape Coast has also been a key area of interest ( Holden *et al.*, 2011; Gbedema, 2012; Mensah, 2012; Owusu-Mintah, 2013). Though many of these studies give very important perspectives on tourism development and assess the tourism potential of Diaspora and non-Diaspora visitation, a gap still exists when it comes to combining these two elements in relation to livelihood impacts. This is why this research is very important as it fills this large gap in the literature. So to set the scene for the methodology chapter, this section will give an overview of the state of tourism development in Ghana and highlights on why studying Diaspora contributions is particularly important. Ghana is a developing country in West Africa that is bordered by Togo, the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso; with the Atlantic Ocean to the south. It has a population of 25 million people (World Bank, 2013) and is made up of 10 administrative regions, including the study regions. Ghana is considered one of the





Figure 3.1 Map of West Africa  
Source: Adapted from D-maps, 2013

safest countries in an otherwise volatile region and was ranked the 11<sup>th</sup> friendliest nation in the world (Forbes, 2011). According to Mwakikagile (2005), this view is also supported by the rest of the African continent as well as by visitors and investors. It is one of the key vantage points for international tourists seeking novel travel experiences. The late 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a need to diversify the country's dependence on manufacturing and agriculture (Akyeampong, 1996) and on gold, timber and cocoa (NTP, 2006). Though they are still foreign exchange earners today (CIA, 2008; Mensah-Ansah, Martin and Egan, 2011) they were considered to be fraught with problems and inconsistencies that rendered them unsustainable (NTP, 2006).

Thus tourism was used as a vehicle to aid in development. Tourism has been identified as a developmental priority in Ghana since the 1960s (NTP, 2006; Asiedu, 1997, Addo, 2011) but in the 1980s it was officially recognized as an industry worthy of attention (Asiedu, 1997). Despite this increase in official attention to the tourism sector in Ghana,

there is still a long way to go. According to the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), Ghana's efforts to improve this sector have been very limited in comparison with many other countries . It was ranked at a very low 119 out of 140 countries in terms of the prioritization of tourism and, in terms of global competitiveness in the travel and tourism industry at 117 out of 140, down nine places from 2011 (WEF, 2013). Ghana was in fourteenth place within sub-Saharan Africa, but was overshadowed by other West African countries such as Gambia and Senegal. Ghana fared badly in a range of other measurements such as tourism infrastructure (hotel rooms, car rentals and Visa ATM acceptance) (102<sup>nd</sup>) and cultural resources (119<sup>th</sup>).

Evidently this suggests that Ghana needs to revitalise its commitment to making tourism a developmental priority and there are many areas that pose challenges and require considerable attention and review. Ghana has succeeded in establishing a range of relevant institutions through which it is possible to direct and stimulate the tourism industry if there is sufficient political commitment and resources. The two main bodies are the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), a policy making body which was established in 1993, and the Ghana Tourist Authority (GTA) (previously known as the Ghana Tourist Board or GTB), the implementing agency established in 1973. Various associations and unions have also been set up to further develop the sector: GHATOF (Ghana Tourism Federation), GTDC (Ghana Tourist Development Company), TOUGHGA (Tour Operators Union of Ghana), GATTA (Ghana Association of Travel and Tour Operators), Ghana Hotels Association, Car Rentals Association, Caterers' Association and HOTCATT (Hotel Catering and Tourism Training Centre).

Tourism is currently one of the fastest growing sectors in Ghana and is currently the country's 4<sup>th</sup> largest foreign exchange earner (NTMS, 2009; Mensah-Ansah *et al.*, 2011). Tourist taxes (corporate, income and value-added), levies, customs/excise duties, licence fees, property rates, property/asset fees, business registration fees, visa/work permits, airport service charges, and so on are some of the ways that tourists contribute financially to the economy (NTMS, 2009). The industry contributed 3%-7% to GDP and

Table 3.1 International tourism receipts for Ghana, 2000 - 2011

Source: Index Mundi, 2013, Figure 1,087,000 in last row is from Sakyi, 2012

Year	International tourist arrivals	International tourism receipts (\$)
2000	399,000	357,000,000
2001	439,000	374,000,000
2002	483,000	383,000,000
2003	531,000	441,000,000
2004	584,000	495,000,000
2005	429,000	867,000,000
2006	497,000	910,000,000
2007	587,000	990,000,000
2008	698,000	970,000,000
2009	803,000	849,000,000
2010	931,000	706,000,000
2011	1,087,000	797,000,000

earned the country 2.19 billion dollars in revenue (Sakyi, 2012) and produced jobs for almost 300,000 Ghanaians (NMTP, 2009; Ghana Government Portal, 2012). In 2011, Ghana received 1,087,000 million tourists (Sakyi, 2012). These visitors originated from the USA, UK, Germany, France and the Netherlands (Addo, 2011) but the majority of tourists were Ghanaians nationals visiting friends and relatives (Addo, 2011; Euromonitor, 2012). Receipts from these tourists came in at \$797,000,000 in 2011 (Table 3.1; World Bank, 2013). Ghana's tourism receipts have increased somewhat since year 2000, with the country achieving its highest receipts (almost a billion US dollars) in 2007. But in spite of steadily increasing tourist arrivals, this amount declined from 2008 to 2010 by almost \$284,000,000 when compared to 2007. Fortunately this amount has increased since then (Table 3.1). In 2008 the average visitor spending was \$2,010 on tourism products and activities saw the most amount (28%) understandably go towards accommodation, but tourists also used about 23% of their money for shopping overall (\$462) with 12 % (\$241) of this going to the informal markets; those

located on the wayside or in open areas (Addo, 2011<sup>10</sup>). But once again, because the ethnicity of these markets was not ascertained, how much of this can be attributed to African American tourists or even just to the USA market could not be calculated. Ghana as a tourist destination is multi-dimensional in its tourism products as it provides the traditional sun, sand and sea attractions, eco-tourism activities and cultural heritage tourism (Blankson, Owusu-Frempong and Mbah, 2004). Some of the attractions include the Mole National Park, picturesque beaches, monkey sanctuaries, the Akosombo Dam, Paga Crocodile Ponds, Wli Waterfalls, the Volta Estuary and the forts and castles. Popular heritage sites like the castles are handled by the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) which is the “legal custodian of Ghana’s material cultural heritage (movable and immovable heritage)” (GMMB, 2013).

Craft villages are one of the country’s strongest yet underdeveloped tourism products (Addo, 2011). This is because there has been a stronger focus on the country’s ecotourism-related tourism products and much less so on craft products (Acquah, 2013). Ghana has many recognized craft villages which deal in various artefacts: Pankrono (pottery production), Ahwiaa (woodcarving), Ntonso, (cloth production) Bonwire (a town in the Ashanti Region that is the home of *Kente* weaving), Arts Centre, Asuofia-Asamang (glass bead ornaments), Foase (wood work), Odumasi (bead production), Koforidua (bead production) and Nsuta (fabric production) (GTA, 2013). Such an affluent cultural heritage base has attracted the African American tourist and their proclivity for pilgrimages of ancestry and culture since independence in 1957. Diaspora tourism attained *heightened* popularity and priority status in the country in 1998 when the celebration of Emancipation was introduced into Ghana by the Former President Jerry John Rawlings (Hasty, 2002). Since then the country has been the destination of choice for this North American Diaspora tourist market (Teye and Timothy, 2004). But as previously stated in Chapter one, there is a need to explore how much impact this tourist segment is making locally and how the tourist market can be utilized to develop tourism further in the country.

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<sup>10</sup> Data is from the Ghana Tourist Authority but is cited in Addo (2011)

### **3.4 Summary**

The body of knowledge on tourism in sub-Saharan Africa has grown in the last couple of years but is still limited when it comes to the economic impacts of the Diaspora on the livelihoods of traders. In spite of their rich slave heritage traditions, research on Diaspora tourism in Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, Benin and Gambia is limited to the emotional and social narratives of the Diaspora touristic experience and less so on the nature of their experiences with traders in the host communities. Many of the heritage tourism and roots tourism products that these locations have to offer are vibrant and attractive. But just how effective these products are have not been thoroughly assessed in these locations. Though it has been shown that African American tourists (particularly personalities) have a limited but significant presence in these areas and are making a number of contributions, their specific impacts when it comes to commercial interactions has not been explored in literature in depth. In Ghana, the African American presence has grown in the last fifteen years, which has shown that the contributions that the country has been making in Diaspora tourism is significant. But there is still a need for a revitalization in its commitment to make tourism and Diaspora tourism a developmental priority once more. This is why this research is particularly important, as it explores the economic contributions that the Diaspora tourist market is making. So with these issues in mind a research strategy was formulated. The processes involved are discussed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 4. Research Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will identify the research methods and methodology used to assess the impacts that African American tourist expenditure has on the livelihoods of craft traders. It will firstly discuss the rationale behind the research and then state the research objectives. It then explains the ‘positionality’ of the researcher and why this gives the researcher an advantage point when obtaining data in the study regions. The chapter then continues to discuss the research strategy taken and the three main study regions of Ghana: the Central Region, Eastern Region and the Greater Accra Region and the study centres; Cape Coast, Elmina, Accra, Koforidua and Odumasi-Krobo (Figure 4.2).

The chapter then goes on to discuss the overall methodological approach and the justification for the adoption of four qualitative strategies; semi-structured interviews, informal discussion, unstructured observation and a group discussion. It discusses the relevance of the specific qualitative methods used and why they have been assigned to specific tourism actors. It then addresses the pilot study, sampling strategies, ethical considerations and the limitations of the study.

### **4.2 Research Objectives**

The methodology of this research sought to address the following objectives:

- a) To explore popular Ghanaian handicrafts that are produced for, and consumed by, African American tourists in Ghana
- b) To assess the spending habits of African American tourists on craft products
- c) To assess how expenditure from craft sales is used by handicraft traders
- d) To trace or map the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure for one craft product at specific sites along the tourist trail.

- e) To assess the roles that tour operators and their management of African American tourists play in influencing the flow of tourist expenditure and consequently also in influencing the traders' income

### **4.3 Positionality**

As a Ghanaian researcher or as an individual who is native to my study area, the extraction of information from participants and requesting their participation in the study posed less of a challenge than it would have done for someone who was not native to the country. Being a student and not a person of authority such as a government official was also advantageous to the situation. These criteria helped to overcome what Scheyvens and Storey (2003:2) refer to as the existence of “power gradients”; a form of power distance or relational barrier between countries that have experienced oppressive historical phases of a superior-subordinate nature. Such relational barriers are often present in the dynamics of the western researcher and the developing country and may affect the flow of information from host to guest (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003). Therefore being a Ghanaian who was accustomed to the norms and traditions of the study area was a distinct added advantage. However Scheyvens and Storey do not rule out the probability of the western-based researcher, who is indigenous to his/her research field, from experiencing similar power struggles with their homeland community. They note that, in spite of the cultural and lingual link between researcher and those to be researched, certain issues related to one's social standing and ethnicity (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003) may still cause considerable disruption to research proceedings. In the case of this research, however, although in some cases differences in tribal language and ethnicity did affect the research process, they did not overshadow or stall queries in any way. The incorporation of multi-lingual research assistants also helped mitigate the race and ethnicity factor. In general, therefore, the cultural connection of the researcher and those to be researched helped the degree of participation because participants could relate to the person interviewing them.

#### **4.4 Rationale behind Choosing the Case Study Sites**

Chapter one discussed the justification behind the choice of the general study regions, but here I explain the rationale behind the choice of the specific study areas and the exclusion of others. The first set of research sites (Elmina Castle and Cape Coast Castle) in the Central Region were chosen because they feature on the itineraries of all tour operators interviewed that handle African American tourists (Tables 8.4 and 8.5). They also had significant handicraft activity present in the area purposely targeted at tourists, so the chances of meeting many Diaspora tourists and craft traders who are key subjects in this study was high. Since every Diaspora-themed itinerary included these world-famous heritage structures, tourists would have the opportunity to engage with craft traders in these areas.. The choice of Accra, Koforidua and Odumasi Krobo as sites for research for this study was made because they were places where important stakeholders in the network of beneficiaries of the craft commodity chain were to be found. They were selected using a form of ‘snowball sampling’ because they were regularly referred to by craft traders from the first sites.

Other areas of potential interest for this research included the W.E.B Dubois Memorial Centre, the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park and Mausoleum and the Accra local market. However, these locations were found unsuitable for the study because there was very limited and often no handicraft activity present. The only handicraft activity seen in the Dubois Centre was an arts and crafts souvenirs shop located in the Diaspora African Forum building (DAF) at the back of the centre and the odd itinerant sellers who would be present when a function was taking place in the compound of the centre. Sellers are not allowed on the premises and when spotted are asked to leave. This was also the case for the Kwame Nkrumah Park where security at the entrance meant that no traders were allowed inside which also discouraged hawkers from trading outside the entrance. The Accra market which mainly sells general goods also sells fabrics and a few crafts. Although located within reasonable proximity (15 minutes walk) of the Mausoleum, as it mainly caters to the daily requirements and necessities of the local population, congestion would have made singling out Diaspora tourists and interviewing them



unrealistic. The following sections illustrate why these sites are so important to heritage tourists and to the Ghanaian tourism industry.

#### **4.4.1 The Central Region**

The Central Region (Figure 4.2) is in southern Ghana and is close to the country's capital, Accra. The region was the seat of the British Colonial Administration up to 1877 (Ghana Culture, 2013). The region has grown into a principal tourist (domestic and international) destination due to the location and establishment of numerous structures and projects that have enhanced its heritage and cultural tourism base (Sirakaya *et al*, 2002). It is famous for its beautiful beaches, picturesque towns and fishing harbours, but even more famous for its ancient forts and castles built by European traders. This concentration of visually striking colonial-era structures has benefited the local community considerably, encouraging tourism to the area and the development of its industry and infrastructure (Richards S., 2002). Ghana has 60 colonial structures of this type along its coast. However of these only three are considered to be actual castles: Elmina Castle, Cape Coast Castle and the Christiansburg Castle (Finley, 2004). Elmina Castle, built by the Portuguese in 1482 and Cape Coast Castle, built by the Swedes in 1653, are the most frequently visited (Finley, 2004). They have also been identified as World Heritage Monuments by the World Heritage Foundation under the United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2013).

#### **4.4.2 Elmina Castle**

Elmina's economy, which is sustained by tourism and fishing, has observed tourist numbers to the Castle grow steadily although not tremendously. Visitor numbers to the Elmina Castle have fluctuated over the years. In 2004, Elmina Castle had over 49,000 visitors with Ghanaian locals forming a majority (77%) of these visitors (GTB, 2004). In 2011, the number grew to 81,677 and then fell to 61,731 in 2013 (GTA, 2013). When built by the Portuguese, the castle was known as *São Jorge da Mina*. It is the oldest still



Figure 4.1 Elmina Castle, Elmina, Central Region  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (February, 2013)

existing European building in sub-Saharan Africa. Elmina Castle (Figure 4.1) has had a lurid and controversial history as an initial trading post for trading in gold, ivory and pepper amongst others, then as protection against any local or foreign hostilities and later as a trading house for slaves. The slave trade was fueled by the growth in plantations in the New World where there was limited and inadequate labour available. Ownership of the castle changed hands over a period of 400 years, moving from Portuguese occupation, to Dutch and finally to British control. Independence in 1957

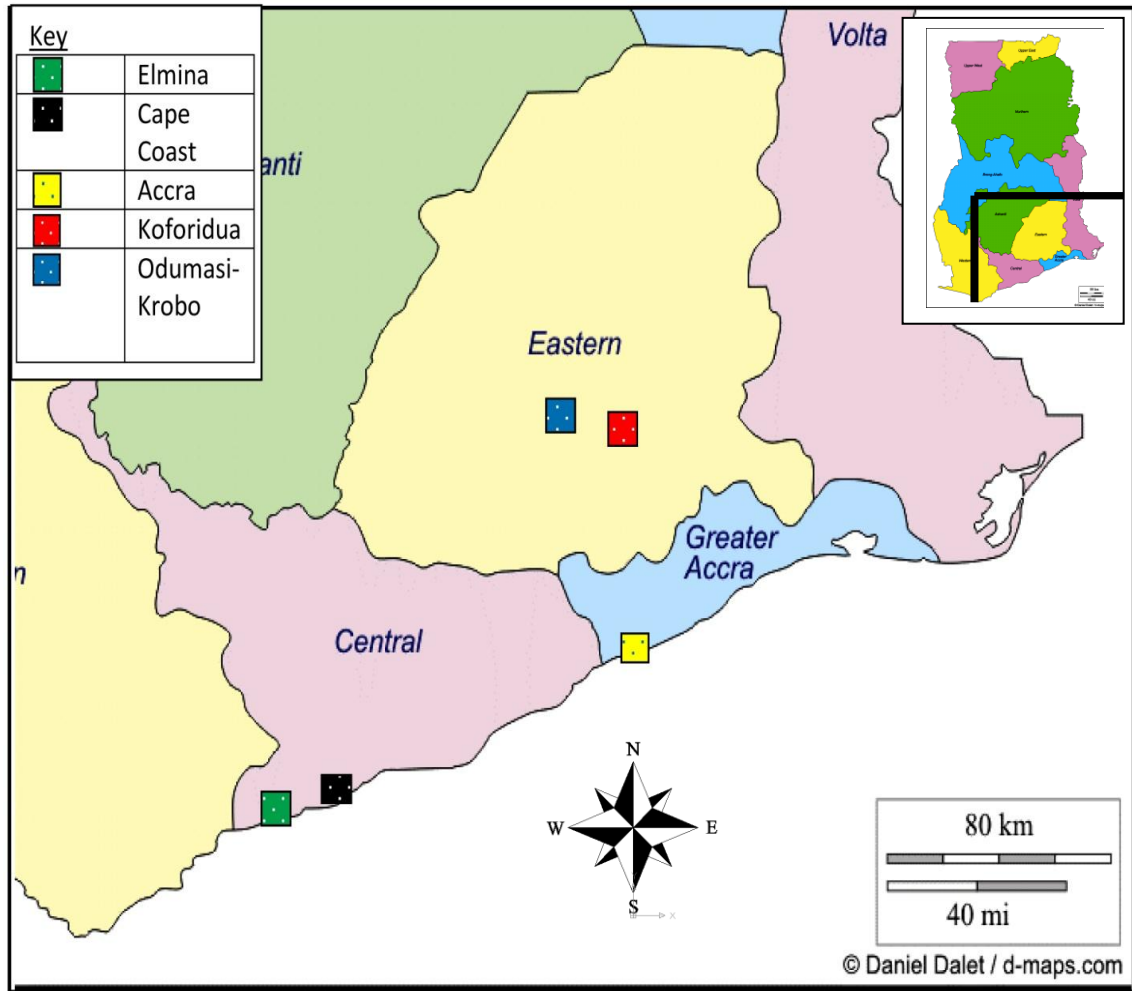


Figure 4.2 Map of southern Ghana showing the study regions  
Source: Adapted from D-maps, 2013

saw the end of the colonial government and the former Gold Coast became known as Ghana. The castle's history as a structure for housing slaves and a point of embarkation for slaves has solidified its status as an international tourism site and common stop for the Diaspora and the historically curious.

#### 4.4.3 Cape Coast Castle

Although not as old as Elmina Castle, Cape Coast Castle (Figure 4.3) also encapsulates a history of slavery and oppression. The castle was initially a timber construction erected by Swedish traders starting in 1653. Its occupation by the Swedes, Dutch and



Figure 4.3 Cape Coast Castle, Central Region  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (March, 2009)

British, its re-construction into the current stone fortification that we see now and further renovations in 1920 and the 1990s have made the castle a famous landmark for tourists and locals alike (see Dantzig, 1980). The location is as popular amongst African Americans as Elmina Castle. Tourism has significantly changed the physical and socio-cultural landscape of this town. Numerous renovations, upgrades, restorations and constructions of museums, colonial structures, and the trade market have significantly influenced its identity and commercialization as a popular tourist hub (Agyei- Mensah and Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2007). There has been considerable growth in hotel accommodation and tourist facilities (Agyei-Mensah and Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2007). Associated with these developments has been a significant rise in the growth of informal sector activities including large numbers of hawkers. Like Elmina, visitor numbers to the Cape Coast Castle have also increased considerably. In 2004, overall tourist numbers were in excess of 36,845 with the Ghanaian locals numbering over 27,000 and taking a 74% share of the visitor market (GTB, 2005). In 2011, this number almost tripled with 97,603 people visiting the Castle whilst just last year, in 2012, the castle had over

109,000 foreign and local visitors (GTA, 2013). But like other tourist statistics, the statistics in this case also do not show what share of these visitors was African American. Documented evidence of an American presence in Cape Coast was in the 2007 PANAFEST visitor survey which recorded the nationality 88 visitors and found that 87% of the visitors were North American (PANAFEST, 2007).

#### **4.4.4 The Greater Accra Region: Accra**

The Greater Accra Region is the smallest of the ten regions but has the second highest population at just over 4 million (Ghana Government Portal, 2013) (Figure 4.1). It is home to Ghana's capital city *Accra* and is the port of disembarkation and embarkation of most international visitors as well as African American tourists seeking their roots. The economy of the region is highly dependent on the private informal sector in which every 6 out of 10 people is employed, and in which females also dominate (Ghana Government Portal, 2013). Informal trade forms a considerable portion of this sector, so any flow of income through this sector also affects the region and economy. As previously noted, Accra is also home to such Pan-African inspired sites as the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum or memorial which houses the remains of Ghana's most famous and influential president. It is also home to famous Pan-Africans such as W.E.B. Dubois and George Padmore, who have centres dedicated to them. These sites which form part of the stops on the tourist heritage trail have also contributed to high international and domestic touristic activity in the areas.

#### **4.4.5 The Eastern Region: Odumasi-Krobo and Koforidua**

The Eastern Region (Figure 4.2), with Koforidua as its capital city, is the sixth largest region in the country and it borders the Greater Accra Region and has 21 administrative districts (Ghana Government Portal, 2013). Its economy is dominated by farming, wholesale and retail and manufacturing, in which females are predominant (Ghana Government Portal, 2013). Small to medium scale industries play a major part in its

economy and informal employment. It serves as the business centre of the region and, of particular significance for this study, it is well known for bead production and has the largest bead selling market in Ghana and West Africa. As a tourist attraction the region is very popular amongst locals and tourists. It is known for its waterfalls, dams, tropical forest, rock formations, mountains, lakes and the resulting wildlife. For Diaspora tourists, attractions such as the Koforidua Bead Market, Aburi craft shops, Abonse slave market and Okomfo Anokye shrines are very popular.

#### **4.5 Methodology and Approach**

This study answered the research objectives by collecting data from three highly involved set of actors within the Diaspora tourism setting; the local craft traders, the tour operators and the African American tourists. Supporting interview data was also obtained from tourism officials. The study mainly used a qualitative research approach which consisted of the following:

- 1) Semi-structured interviews for local tour operators in Accra and Cape Coast, for craft traders from the five mentioned study areas, for African American tourists and selected officials from the Ghana tourism industry
- 2) Informal discussions with traders
- 3) Unstructured observations of tourists and traders at key points of the tourist trail
- 4) A discussion group for an additional set of African American tourists.

In addition to these qualitative research methods, some primary quantitative data was also gathered from craft traders using short open-ended questions. These questions were used to obtain and ultimately analyze the numerical frequencies of their gender, location, types of crafts sold, most purchased craft, style of stands used, their expenditure patterns, customer percentages and buyer frequencies. Obtaining some quantitative data was important in understanding the *scale* of the tourist-trader encounter



within the handicraft environment, and as expenditure is a major factor in this research study, the frequencies of amounts and expenses are quantified and tabulated. Numerical data is also explored in the first three research objectives .

The first research objective on the nature and popularity of Ghanaian crafts was explored by seeking perspectives from the traders, the tourists and tour operators, but most of the data was obtained from trader perspectives .

In order to address the second research objective on spending habits, a three-way perspective was sought; those of the tourists, the tour operators and the traders. This strategy enriched the research by providing viewpoints from all sides of the buying and selling processes.

The third objective, which sought to assess how traders used tourist expenditure, involved gathering quantitative data from traders on their spending patterns

The fourth objective on tracing the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure used tourist and trader perspectives on the issue, which created a path for exploration. The assessment enabled the study to trace other traders that were benefiting from tourist spending on crafts and the variables that affected their livelihoods.

The final research objective on how tour operator management of tourists affected their expenditure flow, was explored by interviewing tour operators on their management techniques as well as gathering data from tourists on their experience with their tour company.

#### **4.5.1 Justification of Qualitative Research Methods**

Semi structured interviews were used because they are a key research tool that allows the researcher to explore beyond the specified questions, to gain additional insights and enrich more superficial understandings which might be derived from more structured

queries (May, 2001). They allowed such queries to be directional and focused as well as allowing any additional information that may be relevant or vital to the study to be included. The structured interview was initially considered as a potential tool in the study but was ultimately dismissed because tightly defined questions were considered too restricting. Though more relaxed, unstructured interviews would have been prone to too much digression and it was important that specific issues were addressed, especially in the case of tourism officials, where time was an important factor. Semi-structured interviews were neither too restricting nor too relaxed and allowed respondents to volunteer information that was still relevant to the topic being discussed and which otherwise may have been omitted (May, 2001). Observation was used as a tool in the study because it is considered one of the most vital research methods (Jones and Somekh, 2005). This is because experience teaches us that people's accounts of what happens in a situation and the reality of what actually took place can vary somewhat (O'Leary, 2010). A moderate form of participation which involved maintaining a good balance of involvement and disengagement when necessary, was used in the study. This was because participatory observation that was passive in nature and simply involved me being a bystander in my observations would prevent me from immersing myself in the field to gain a more accurate idea of events taking place. This is why May (2001:173) explained that observation entails "...engaging in a social scene, experiencing it and seeking to understand and explain it". It involves heightened visual and perceptive awareness of the study environment and the ability to encapsulate views and findings in a theoretical shell (May, 2001; Hennik, Hutter and Bailey, 2011) as it records behaviour, actions and interaction. Likewise, observations that are too immersive risk losing all objectivity in interpretations

The subjective nature of observation as a method of social research has rendered it susceptible to criticisms about its objectivity and accuracy (Kumar, 2005; Jones and Somekh, 2005). It is also considered a challenging research method to execute (May, 2001) because of the affect that the researcher's position and subjectivity can have on the interpretation of observational data is interpreted (Jones and Somekh, 2005). The success of the method relies on the researcher connecting and merging with the host



community and its activities (Nichols, 1991). In the field, there is also a risk of participants becoming aware of being observed and altering their frame of mind or sense of awareness and hence polluting the research atmosphere (Kumar, 2005). But this was counteracted by my positionality as a researcher who is indigenous to the region being researched. Additional analysis through group discussions provided further insight into decisions taken during commerce. Though used minimally it is still relevant to justify the use of the discussion group here because these provided important data for the study. Group formations are said to have many observational advantages.

Though it is not feasible to use the opinions of a single group discussion as a representation of the entire population (May, 2001), it is a style of social research which mimics interaction and reality-based situations (Flick 2002). It enables the researcher to read body language, the interactive dynamics of group members, the variety in responses and any inconspicuous language (verbal or physical) that may occur (May, 2001; Cloke *et al.*, 2004; Barbour and Schostak, 2005). According to Barbour and Schostak (2005), using groups has the advantage that the interviewer can gain access into how people form their views and opinions as a group, which is not possible in individual interviews. This was particularly relevant in identifying and illuminating the social and cultural discord often documented to exist between the continental African and Diaspora African (Bruner, 1996; Ebron, 1999; Finley, 2001; Richards S., 2002; Timothy and Teye, 2004). This was relevant to the study because such discord is often believed to percolate into the economic interactions between the tourist and the trader. An example is the influence of westernized societal practices that caused the African American tourist to be critical of local trade practices whilst in Ghana and hence avoided buying local food due to health and safety concerns. This issue of distrust was found to have also permeated the craft industry but for different reasons as will be discussed in the results chapters. Because of the issues with subjectivity in research, the use of multiple methods is always helpful in social science research to provide some element of triangulation to allow confirmation of some of the evidence obtained. In general multiple methods are likely to improve the quality of the data obtained (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

#### **4.6 Pilot Study for African American Tourist Visitor Statistics and Trader Interviews**

A pilot study was undertaken in February 2009 which involved gathering demographic and ethnicity-based data about American tourist visitor numbers to the country during peak periods of visitation. This involved undertaking informal interviews with several tour operators which handled Diaspora-themed tours and asking public and private sector tourism-related bodies such as the Ghana Tourist Authority, African American Association of Ghana and the Ministry of Tourism for any available statistics on visitor numbers and ethnicity in particular. The pilot study found that there was a lack of national statistical data on visitor ethnicity. In other words, classifications of tourists are based on country of residence and nationality but not on ethnicity within nationalities. Reasons for this are that the accumulation of such statistics in addition to the stats already being gathered would be ‘too tedious’ and ‘cumbersome’ to undertake (Interview, Research Assistant, GTA, 2009). So in order to have a usable number as a study reference, another source for statistics, namely the tour operator, was used. Initial informal interviews and unstructured observations with traders on both study sites also indicated the need to address three concerns: first, that additional local research assistants would be needed to deal with the volume of traders; second, that these traders were more accessible during the peak hours of 10am-5pm (two hours after they arrived at work and an hour prior to their departure), and third, the predominantly *Fante* speaking<sup>11</sup> part of the Central Region would act as a partial barrier to communication between the primary researcher and the trader. As a result of this realization, it was ensured that the local researchers from Cape Coast and Elmina were fluent in the local dialect.

#### **4.7 Sampling Methods and Sizes of Target Groups**

Local craft traders, tour operators, African American tourists and tourism officials were

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<sup>11</sup> *Fante* is a dialect of the widely spoken Akan language in Ghana. Although quite similar to *Twi*, another widely spoken dialect, certain variations which exist may pose a problem for the researcher and may cause frustrations with the interview process. Most *Twi* speakers can understand 60-70% of what *Fante* speakers say. However, for effective research, the potential for error in this case was omitted.

all selected using non-probability purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was the most appropriate method because it involved the specific selection of respondents who were likely to produce the most relevant data for the topic being researched (May, 2001; Richards and Morse, 2013). This allowed for the selection of participants who would be crucial to the research and who could provide invaluable insight and in-depth knowledge in the field being examined. Overall 226 people were questioned. Most of the interviewees were handicraft traders (164), 47 were tourists, 11 were tour operators and four were selected tourism officials. Table 4.1 below summarizes, the raw data generated by each data collection device, where they were employed and the objectives to which they contributed. Itinerant and non-itinerant handicraft traders who were located close to the five tourist centres frequented by African American tourists (as outlined in Chapter one) were the key sample population. Out of an intended 160 interviews for both sites (80 for each site), 124 valid responses were obtained in Elmina and Cape Coast. Most of the unused responses were from traders who were uncooperative during interviews while others were from non-craft sellers (for e.g. fish, cigarettes, pizza). Non-craft sellers were also interviewed because it was initially believed that their contributions would be important to the study, however as the focus of the study narrowed down to just handicraft traders, these results were omitted.

In the case of tour operators, the sampling frame was taken from the Ghana Tourist Authority directory of licensed travel and tour operators in the country. The GTA directory lists over 220 licensed travel and tour operators in the Greater Accra Region and four from the Central Region. This list was cut down and non-valid respondents were omitted. Therefore the initially estimate of 220 (as indicated by GTA) shrank to 11. This was because over a third of companies that referred to themselves as travel and tour companies in southern Ghana actually dealt solely in flight bookings and ticketing and did not undertake any tour operations (in spite of being called tour operators). This was found to be a common practice in Ghana where titles were often used capriciously as a marketing ploy and also as an opportunity to capitalize on any future ambitions that the tour operator may have. Many other companies, though listed, were found to be no longer operational, whilst others that were asked for interviews stated that they no

Table 4.1 Summary of data generated by each data collection device, location employed and the objectives to which it contributes

Source: Author's Research (Here forth all tabulated data use data collected by the author unless otherwise specified).

	Data collection tool	Location	Number of surveys	Research objectives
Traders	Semi-structured interviews	Elmina Castle	63	a, b, c and d
		Cape Coast Castle	61	a, b, c and d
		Accra Arts Centre	12	a, b, c and d
		Koforidua Crafts Market	16	a, b, c and d
		Odumasi Krobo (Cedi Factory and surrounding area)	4	a, b and d
	Informal discussions	Accra Arts Centre	8	a, b, c and d
Tourists	Semi-structured interviews	Accra	40	a, b, d and e
	Discussion group	Coconut Grove Regency, Accra	7	a, b, d and e
Tour operators	Semi-structured interviews	Accra	11	d
Tourism officials	Semi-structured interviews	Accra	4	a and d

longer dealt with African American tourists due to dwindling African American tourist numbers, a growing market from Europe and the Americas and an inability to cater to the high-quality standards that many African American tourists required. Some of the companies that claimed to deal solely in tour operations were later found to only cater to European, Caucasian-American and Asian tourists, which formed the majority of their

clientele. Two of only four companies from the Central Region which handled African American tourists on any significant level were included in the sample. The Ghana Tourist Authority (GTA) also recommended six travel and tour operators that they considered top-rated companies and popular Diaspora tourist handlers. Two of these, Sunseekers Tours and Land tours were also mentioned regularly during enquiries with tourism officials and tourism bodies and as a result are referred to regularly. Other companies that were not included in the top rated list but also handled African American tourists to some degree were also included. Nine out of ten companies agreed to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews at their company's premises while one was conducted over the telephone due to accessibility issues with the company's current.

A lot of effort was put into ensuring that as many qualified companies as possible were included in the study. African American tourists were selected based on three essential criteria; that they were tourists that they were African American and that they were at the selected craft centres. So tourists who were shopping at the Arts Centre, the Koforidua Crafts Market and at Elmina and Cape Coast were approached and selected. Ten tourist interviews from each craft centre were used. Being at a craft centre was important because tourists needed to have some experience of purchasing crafts and interacting with traders prior to the interview. Tourists were asked if they were African American and then the details of the study were explained after which potential participants were asked if they were interested in participating. Those that took part in the discussion groups were selected from a tour company while those involved in interviews were selected based on their availability at the targeted tourist craft markets. The group discussions were held at the tourists' hotel. Details of the research study, the desire to conduct group discussions, its objectives and the required participation of the tourists were communicated to them through their tour operators. African American tourists were not offered and did not request any financial incentives but were more than willing to participate for the sake of research. According to Bruner (1996), these tourists often comprise lecturers and university scholars. This was found to be true to some extent in my research as many of the tourists interviewed were professionals and many

were lecturers and university staff, and it was this academic disposition that made them want to participate in the interviews.

#### **4.8 Time Frame of Research**

Field data for the study was gathered between 2009 and 2012. The preliminary phase of data gathering which involved the accumulation of relevant documents and assessing the field (pilot study) was done from February to April of 2009. During this period, preliminary research on tour operators was conducted – narrowing them down to a small number of relevant participants. This was because some operators did not have website, email access or telephone access and therefore had to be visited in person; also constant rescheduling for interviews meant that some of them would have to be interviewed some time later in 2010

The first phase of field work was from June to September 2009 which covered the whole Emancipation/PANAFEST period. It was during this time that a couple of African American tourists in Elmina and Cape Coast were interviewed. The second phase took place from February to May of 2010 when tourism officials were interviewed. This was also when the first batch and the bulk of traders at Elmina and Coast were also interviewed. The third phase was in the following year in 2011. It was in July of that year that the discussion group session was conducted. After it was realized that more data was required, a fourth and final phase of data gathering took place in 2012. During this time one other important tourism official was interviewed due to their unavailability during the previous years. The final set of tourists were interviewed during this time. It was also from February to May 2012 that the final batch of traders from Koforidua and the Arts Centre were interviewed. It was important that data was gathered each year as compared to conducting all the field work in a one year period. This was because of the short time frame of the Emancipation festival period. It was only during these three months within the year that I could capitalize on all Diaspora tourist-related activity and obtain as many respondents as possible to make up for their transient nature.

#### **4.9 Semi-Structured Interviews: the Tour Operators, Tourists, Traders and Tourism Officials**

Interview questions directed at the tour operators addressed two research objectives: the role that operators and their management techniques play in tourist spending (the fourth research objective) and assessing their clients' spending habits on crafts in the country (the second research objective). Seven guide questions were used for this group of respondents (see Appendix 1). They explored the processes, strategies and techniques of tour management in general and how it influenced tourist spending habits and their level of contact with local traders. Questions directed at tour operators also asked for statistical data on annual tourist numbers (or seasonal if annual numbers were not available ) and details of their tour packages and prices as a way to get a sense of how much the tourists were spending in the country overall. Tourist spending habits on crafts were explored through questions on tourist circuits and itineraries (that is where they visited during their trip), the extent of their interaction with traders and the operators view of their spending habits. In addition, the tour operators were also asked what they thought their clients value was to tourism development in the country . The value of the African American tourist market has never been in question, but it was important that the tour operator view was obtained as they are often the first points of local contact for the tourist. .Eleven tour operators were interviewed: namely Land Tours, Sunseekers Tours, AG Travel Services, Graceland Travel and Tours, Lomo Nainoo, Nayak Travel and Tours, One Africa Tours, Sagrenti Tours, Sankofa Meroe Tours, Starline Travel and Tours and Felix Ngua Tours. As already explained, where possible the companies were initially telephoned and emailed to solicit for interviews regarding their management techniques of African American tourists.

It was observed prior to interviews that the tour operating industry in Ghana, like other regions, is competitive and at times secretive. This situation has been observed by others. For example Ioannides (1998:138), in a study that examined the role of tour operators in the tourism industry found that “company representatives appear reluctant to part with any information, especially regarding volume of sales, trends in market research, or arrangements concerning commissions”. This was found to be the case

amongst many of the Accra-based tour operators who explained that the main reason for this was the fear that their competitors could utilize any delicate details or commercially valuable information to their advantage. Some of the companies interviewed were reluctant to provide certain pieces of information such as visitor statistics and company trends, and when they did, they were only estimates. They were more forthcoming with qualitative queries on the visitor experience. In one case a Ghana Tourism Authority recommended company refused to be interviewed or to provide any information because of a bad past experience regarding the acquisition and damaging use of company information by a student. Protecting the privacy of their businesses and ensuring the competition did not get sensitive data unfortunately took precedence in many of the interviews. So any information divulged was done sensitively and quite selectively. Although this was a minor setback, the remaining companies were able to provide insight into their management techniques and their influences on tourist expenditure and handicraft traders

Tourists at the craft centres were interviewed from 10am-5pm, which was when most visitors were present at these locations. The questions for this group addressed four of the five research questions; the nature of popular crafts purchased by the tourists, their spending habits, mapping the beneficiaries of their spending and the role that their operators play in their expenditure. The questions (see Appendix 1) covered three main areas of interest: trader-related queries, tourist expenditure-related queries and PANAFEST/Emancipation festival-related queries. The 13 questions were structured to extract information that would allow for maximum participant contribution and full expressions of their views on these issues. General questions such as those about tourists' motivations for visiting the area were geared at ascertaining whether crafts were one of their main reasons for visiting. A subsequent question which was a more leading version of the first was added to further discuss how important craft shopping was to the tourist. Trader-related questions such as the tourists' impressions of traders and their advice for them were support questions about their experiences with the craft sellers whilst on their trip and what could possibly be improved to enhance the tourist-trader experience and ultimately the craft sector. Tourists were also asked to give their



opinion on the management style of their operator (if they were using one) . Their responses were then compared and discussed with the tour operator's view (Chapter Eight) . Expenditure-related questions such as what crafts were bought and why, how much they spent and their preferences for or attraction to specific crafts addressed the first objective on the nature of Diaspora tourist crafts and the second objective of their spending habits. The importance of tourists to homeland development was further discussed by asking them what other investments they have made or would like to make whilst in the country.

Overall, most tourists were welcoming and willing to participate as long as they were guaranteed that the process would not take too long. Others deferred the interview till after their shopping experience. But because many tourists were unwilling to stop and conduct the interview, for the most part many of the interviews were done whilst walking alongside the tourist while others were done standing. This was understandable as many of the craft centres did not have comfortable seating areas and tourists were generally not comfortable with being taken away from their shopping experience for an interview. As a result of these inhibitors, some interviews were partially completed. Queries with tourists ultimately covered a wide range of issues, but only those relevant to the research objectives were referred to in the study and used to support or question feedback from the various respondents.

Tourism officials from the public and private sector were also interviewed briefly. These interviewees were drawn from the Ministry of Tourism, Ghana Tourism Authority and the African American Association of Ghana. These officials included a tourism officer, an assistant tourism officer and a public relations officer. They were selected because they had considerable experience in the tourism industry and had encountered many African American tourists. In this case interviewees were not given a long list of questions like the other respondents, which is why they are not included in the appendix section. The interviews conducted lasted approximately 10-15 minutes each because they did not have more time to spare. The officials were only asked to give their views and opinions on the significance and value of the African American tourist market to the

Ghana tourism sector and on local craft traders. This area of questioning was considered the most important for this group whilst other specific questions were best retained for those with one-on-one experience with the tourists themselves. It was important to ascertain how officials viewed tourist contributions as they have knowledge of the sector, obviously, and also to see if their views agreed or differed with the information being derived from other sources.

Traders at the Accra Arts Centre were interviewed over several weeks from February – March 2012. It was realized that the peak period of visitation would influence traders' ability to provide detailed answers, as they were often extremely busy, however any other time outside the window of opportunity (10-5pm) would have made getting answers much more difficult. This period also allowed for the researcher to interview as many traders as possible in a day, as well as to observe some African American buyers and their interaction with traders. Aside from semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1) which were in some cases written down, other information was gained through informal discussion. Many traders were slightly uncomfortable with physical recording, especially when it involved answering sensitive questions regarding income and prices, and as a result some of the interviews or queries were carried out as discussions with notes made afterwards. It was a challenge obtaining extensive and detailed information from many of these sellers who were prone to providing short answers. Some traders were skeptical about answering questions from a researcher relating to selling prices and item procurement costs and made it apparent that they sometimes wondered if my work might have tax implications due to the nature of some of the quantitative questions. Such skepticism is frequently met in social science research when issues of income are discussed and this is understandable (Van Eeden, 2011). The reluctance of individuals in answering questions that delve into issues that they may consider personal or an invasion of their private lives, form one negative aspect of being an interviewer or the one who is seeking information (Bleek, 1987). Nonetheless, despite being met with some caution and skepticism, traders were generally forthcoming and receptive and with a degree of persistence and tact, it was possible to obtain sufficient and reliable data for the needs of the research. The questions asked addressed three objectives: how traders'

earnings from sales are used, tourist spending habits and mapping the beneficiaries of tourist spending. To assess trader expenditure, traders were also asked about their own spending patterns and craft procurement details. Trader views and perceptions of the tourists, what items they purchased, what kind of customers they were and how many purchased and visited them periodically sought to assess tourist spending behavior. These procurement and spending details enabled the study to further trace what channels tourist spending fed through.

#### **4.10 Discussion Groups: African American Tourists**

The discussion group was initially chosen as the main form of inquiry for this sample but later became a supportive method. This was because the itinerant nature of these tourists, and their set itineraries combined with the logistics involved in coordinating schedules made conducting multiple discussions groups difficult, and as a result only one was conducted for African American tourists. This discussion group consisted of seven African American participants from Sunseekers Travel and Tours, Ghana. Authorization was sought from the company to gather and interview their travelers on their return to their hotel. Questions in these discussion groups were based on the same questions addressed to the African American tourists in their semi-structured interviews (shown in Appendix 1). But because there was more time to discuss the issues at hand, many new and relevant issues and concerns arose and were discussed. Because of this, the group discussions provided new information and were valuable in supporting the main methodologies of semi-structured interviews, informal discussions and observations used in the study.

The results of the focus group were extremely useful and helped to identify relevant variables that supported interviews conducted with other tourists and traders. The line of questioning and other issues that naturally arose provided an insightful view into how traders and tour operators are affecting local trade. It was found that gathering tourists in a calm, non-commercial environment extracted vital and useful information that offered insight into tourist perceptions and interactions with traders.

#### **4.11 Observations: Tourist-Trader Interactions during Commerce**

Observations of the interactive dynamics of the African American tourist and the trader during commercial transactions were made. These observations were made over the course of several months and any relevant observations were recorded and included in the study. The objective of this method was to support discussion group interviews by gaining visual confirmation of which kinds of goods tourists gravitate towards and which kind of commerce receives the least attention as well as observing their selling techniques. But as previously explained, there was the risk of recording subjective findings in terms of determining which tourist is African American and which is not, without approaching them and asking. This unfortunately could not be avoided but was mitigated and hopefully supported by respondents' views from the two remaining research methods, pertaining to the level of patronage of local goods and tourist identification.

#### **4.12 Informal Discussions: the Traders**

Informal discussions were especially chosen as a research method because they are an important form of query for gathering impromptu data. It served as a time-saving tool, in that a larger number of traders could be interviewed within a short period of time. It also acted as a form of support to semi-structured interviews, as traders who did not want to have the conversations recorded (written or electronic), preferred to engage in casual discussions. Conversational queries were often found to be the most appropriate method for interacting and extracting information in a more informal and relaxed manner. This line of questioning asked the same questions that the semi-structured interviews used. Questions asked during informal discussions were very relaxed and resembled that of a social setting rather than that of a rigid 'interviewer versus interviewee' one. Questions blended social conversations such as the weather, a person's health, their view points on general issues, how their business is faring etc with interview queries to make the mode of delivery less formal.

#### **4.13 Open-Ended Questions: the Traders**

As explained earlier, open-ended questions were used to gather some important quantitative data from traders such as the types of crafts sold, the most purchased crafts, style of stands used, trader expenditure patterns, size of their customer base and buyer frequencies. These questions which required more than a yes or no response were chosen because they were 'likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondents (Denscombe, 2003:156). This was particularly important for the income-related questions (discussed in Chapter six). In some cases, questions about trader businesses were administered after the interview had taken place, so that respondents didn't feel cornered by the interview process. In other instances, some of the issues addressed in the open-ended questions came out in the semi-structured interviews and so did not need to be addressed further. So the process of administration was strategically non-uniform and tailored to the attitudes and responses of the sellers. This is because I had to use my judgment and discretion to administer these questionnaires (Denscombe, 2003) (and interviews) in a way that would not irritate the traders, especially during busy business hours. Although open questions required more effort from the interviewees, it still allowed traders to respond in their own words (Denscombe, 2003).

#### **4.14 Data Processing and Analysis**

Data processing and analysis in the study made use of electronic and manual review processes in order to ensure that the data that was collected was accurate. Combining both methods was a form of quality control. It is important to mention that all responses were recorded (written down) *verbatim*, including any colloquialisms, a key quality control issue and a necessary step for accuracy. This is because as a key principle of qualitative data analysis, it was ensured that the analysis of the data and any conclusions that would be drawn were sourced directly from the evidence given in the data (Denscombe, 2007). So it was important that any nuances in language or expressions were captured.

Firstly, all of the data obtained through the four methodological tools - semi-structured interviews, discussion groups, informal discussions and observations - were collated and read through several times as a final quality control check to ensure consistency and accuracy in the material collected. Any omissions in the data, such as unfilled or partially filled interview sheets were initially placed aside so that they could be categorized or reviewed later. The raw data sheets were then sorted into the three main interviewee groups – traders, tourists and tour operators - and then counted to determine how many responses had been obtained for each set of actors. The data was then re-sorted into the kinds of queries conducted- that is the amount of semi-structured interviews, informal discussion, discussion group sessions and observations. Data from the observations were placed in a separate pile as these consisted of data that involved all three groups. After this regrouping was tallied up, it was once again re-grouped into the set of relevant tourism actors for easier analysis. The number of complete (fully-filled) interview sheets were counted and the amount was then compared to the initial estimate of data to be collected. This was done to assess the response rate. For example, interviews conducted from the Elmina and Cape Coast samples came to 124 out an intended 160 responses for that area, which was considered a healthy response rate for this sample. Though the study did not send out questionnaires to be filled, achieving a good response rate was of particular importance to the data analysis as it helped to improve the accuracy of data collected. In other words, all the traders in this research area (as the initial research area) had to be sampled in some way to achieve a representative sample of the area. As already mentioned this even meant interviewing non-handicraft traders, but their contributions were later omitted in the study and did not constitute the final set of responses.

After the raw data was grouped under the relevant set of actors, each pile was then read through once more to ensure that all the responses given were relatable to the research questions. Another important step was to make sure that written responses were legible and could be transformed into a data set. During the interviews, informal discussions and discussion groups, extra care was taken to ensure that any responses that were unclear were clarified at that moment before leaving the interview area. This mitigated

the possibility of respondents changing their minds about being re-interviewed, changing their story during the re-interview or not recalling certain events, which would inevitably throw off the data and cause some concern when it came to validity. During the collection of data via the interviews, it had already been possible to identify some general issues and points that were arising, as they cropped up frequently in the responses. For example it was already evident at the initial stages of data collection that beaded crafts, which had been mentioned regularly in many of the responses, was one of the key craft products patronized by African American tourists, and a product that would feature considerably in the study. Another issue that was becoming evident was the trader dissatisfaction with African American purchasing frequencies. These raw findings and any other interesting points were noted separately for further reflection during analysis. So at this stage, five piles of data (tourists, traders, tour operators, tourism officials and incomplete interviews) were ready to be re-analyzed using software.

NVIVO 8 (qualitative research analysis software) was used to analyze and interpret the research data, both quantitative and qualitative. It was an effective research tool and quality control tool that aided in sorting out and making sense of the large volume of interview data. Material such as PDFs, word documents and excel sheets were imported into NVIVO and organized into various themes using coding. The excel sheets tabulated non-lengthy data such as the gender, location, age and type of sales structure of traders. The numerical frequencies or occurrences of these variables were explored using the NVIVO data filtering function. This information was firstly transformed into an excel data set and then imported into the NVIVO data set where the variables were categorized and specific details were filtered or sorted by each classifying field to observe any trends and patterns. For example, when it came to exploring the nature of crafts in Ghana, issues like the types of crafts sold, the most purchased craft, the frequency of bead sellers or where the crafts were sold were filtered against gender and location to see how they correlated. So one could determine, for instance, how many male craft sellers from Elmina who use stalls also sold sculptures, by simply selecting each of these factors, from which NVIVO would then filter this out and provide a number out of your data set. Variations of these manipulated data were then transformed

into tables in the study to help make sense of the data. When it came to more lengthy responses, codes were created that represented each tourism actor, then nodes were created to represent each of the research objectives, and then the corresponding interview questions that related to them were grouped to them. Coding in NVIVO involved gathering different kinds of information and coding them into a relevant category. For instance, paragraphs or sentences from respondents related to African American tourists' fondness for purchasing beaded jewellery were coded or tagged as 'AA (African American) bead purchases' and then gathered into a node under 'trader responses' and 'African American tourist responses'. These nodes in this case related to and thus were gathered under a further node for the research objective on African American spending habits. Nodes in this case acted as a larger umbrella under which smaller subjects or themes could be grouped. This process was repeated for numerous themes, ideas and comments, which were then reflected on and could be cross-referenced with other nodes from other tourism actors. In cases of doubt, reference was made back to the written responses. But in this case, using NVIVO was a quick and efficient way to reflect on interview data. Notes from the observations and their corresponding photos were also imported into NVIVO as memos and photos so that material from the interviews that corresponded to that particular data set could be retrieved easily and cross referenced to the observations.

Any further themes that emerged from the data were grouped, then re-grouped and any relationships, patterns or themes were then coded and 'noded' accordingly. Certain parts of the data were prioritized over others – that is more attention or focus was given to interesting or relevant responses that had been given. But extra attention was paid to responses or information that answered or related to the research objectives. This information was then applied to the thesis and used to enrich the research study.

#### **4.15 Strengths and Limitations of the Research Study**

The main limitations included the unavailability of nationally recognized statistical data on annual African American visitor numbers. Therefore data regarding the number of



African American visitations annually had to be collected from the tour operators instead, which provided only a limited sample to work with. Although this approach omitted tourists travelling individually or with foreign-based tour companies, it still provided a rough indication of tourists' numbers and a workable estimate (discussed further in Chapter eight).

Another limitation was the necessity of conducting semi-structured interviews and questionnaires with traders during business hours as this affected the nature of the responses given. Ideally interviews of this depth should have been conducted in an area that was devoid of external influence or disruptions. I am aware that the trading arena was not the ideal place to conduct an interview, but traders would not have been willing to sacrifice that amount of time in this situation without expecting some kind of financial incentive. This would have required me to compensate each of the traders for their time, which would have been logistically and financially impractical for a student to undertake. Though interjecting customers often inhibited the trader's ability to provide more lengthy responses, the impromptu responses did have an advantage in that they were considered the most honest because they did not give the interviewee a lot of time to formulate preconceived or politically correct responses. One other benefit to this method of research was the ability to observe the interactions of the traders and their African American clients' first hand. It was also the interjections from buyers that enabled the researcher to get a front row seat to observe interpret and record the nuances and complexities of the purchasing environment. In terms of the language barriers, some queries were framed in the local dialect and then translated into English. This was done as accurately as possible, and although they do not impact negatively on the accuracy of the answers, some local terminology did not have a direct English equivalent and was replaced with the closest translation possible.

Obtaining a larger sample size of tour operators that conducted tours and African American tourists would have been ideal as this would have meant that the results could have been more generalisable for the tour operating industry. Because the majority of

travel and tour operators in Ghana deal mainly with airline reservations and ticketing and rarely organize tours, only a few had the necessary criteria for the study to obtain usable data on their management techniques of these tourists. But a bigger concern here was the statistical aspect of tourist numbers where only a handful of operators could give estimates on annual African American tourist numbers. Protecting the privacy of their businesses and ensuring the competition did not get access to potentially destructive sensitive data unfortunately took precedence in many of the interviews. So any information divulged during interviews was done sensitively and quite selectively. So although data gained from the tour operators was essential, the selectivity of information that they gave meant that it was likely that other relevant management details that could have impacted on trader expenditure were not known, but could only be speculated on.

The main issue with African American tourists was their lack of availability. The gathering of African American tourists, posed a considerable challenge. Another challenging area was the decision to utilize discussion groups as an initial means of data collection for tour operator-handled tourists. This strategy, though theoretically feasible came with its own set of logistical challenges, as this meant that tourists who were on a structured or semi-structured itinerary had little time available to participate in interviews. This also meant that additional effort had to be put into gaining permission from tour operators to involve their clients in the study. This was understandable as interviews were not part of their itinerary and when it was allowed it was done as a courtesy to the researcher. So these logistical issues did not allow for more group discussions to be organized, which would have brought a more interactive perspective to the tourist-trader purchasing relationship. Nonetheless the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires that were administered acted as a great means of support and reference for the discussion group that was conducted. But this particular limitation does not in any way deter from the richness of information gained from the discussion. The design used and the informal discussions and interviews conducted with the remaining respondents enriched the information gained from group discussions. In spite of these limitations, the varying roles of the tourism actors in the tourism scene, the challenges of

the Ghanaian social, political and economic makeup and the overall choice of methodology, provided a good range of valid of the information.

#### **4.16 Ethical Considerations**

The study complied with all the necessary ethical concerns and considerations of King's College, London. This was very important as all methods of social inquiry at some point involved an "invasion of privacy" (Richards and Morse, 2013: 44). All interviewees were given information sheets, consent forms and the use, retention and reuse forms. In terms of the discussion group session, as mentioned permission was sought by the tour operator prior to interviewing their clients. In addition, participants were provided with information sheets and consent forms to sign. Oral explanations of the study was also given prior to and during discussions. African American tourists interviewed outside of the discussion group were also properly informed and all the necessary forms provided and signed

Varying literacy and educational levels of local craft traders meant that when needed the local dialect was used. Traders were never coerced into giving any information that they did not feel comfortable providing. Because of the hesitance of some traders to sign forms, occasionally informed consent had to be given verbally. This is due to certain historical and political experiences where any written documentation that requires signing often causes suspicion amongst locals. As a result, verbally explaining the objectives and purpose of research and asking for their consent was the most effective strategy in this case. As mentioned tour operators were given ample time and informed by telephone or email, 3 weeks prior to the scheduled interview date, of the purpose of the study. This provided enough time for them to consider whether or not to participate in the study. Operators were also allowed to choose an alternative date for the interview should the scheduled one not be suitable. Information sheets and consent forms explaining the purpose and objective of the interview and how their contribution to research will be used were also provided and signed by each operator being interviewed. The information sheets explained that the interviewees had the choice to be named or

not in the study. Personal information such as the name of their company and other sensitive company data would be retained and used only with participants' permission. In the case that it was agreed that such details were to be included in the study, participants were fully informed, permission sought and given the use, retention and re-use form. However if they preferred not to provide company names and other sensitive data, then anonymization techniques would be used as identification. This is the reason that some interviewees are named and others are not in the study.

#### **4.17 Summary**

The research study used a mainly qualitative research approach but also gathered some quantitative data to support the research objectives. Semi-structured interviews, informal discussions, unstructured observations and discussion groups were the methodological tools used to help provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of the African American tourist dollar on local craft trader livelihoods, the Ghanaian tourism industry and homeland development on a whole. These research tools were effective in addressing and exploring the four research objectives – spending habits of tourists on crafts, trader spending patterns, network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure and tour operator management of tourists. The validity of the data - that is its accuracy and precision - were the right kind for investigating the research topic. It is believed that the data collected are valid and provide a reasonably accurate depiction of the key issues in Diaspora tourism to Ghana that this study sought to address. Throughout this methodology chapter care has been taken to point to any problems that were faced during data-gathering. In each case, explanations have been given about how measures were taken to minimize the impacts of these problems and to ensure that the data collected were reasonably accurate.

For example, as discussed in Section 4.9, it is recognized that it was not ideal to gather data from traders when they were working and selling, but the logistics of a single student with limited finances and time meant that this was inevitable.

However it is not felt that this undermined the validity of the data gathered - it gave a very good approximation of the situation. The fact that traders were giving answers to the questions asked provides good support for this. And, as noted, as is so often the case in social science research, it was possibly to make a virtue of a necessity because this strategy turned out to provide the advantage of being able to observe many trader-tourist encounters which were invaluable for this study. It is true that had each trader kept written accounts of stocks and sales that a more precisely accurate analysis could have been achieved, but this was impossible since a key characteristic of informal trade is that such accounts are generally not kept. So the traders themselves are the best source of whatever knowledge there is on these matters. Assessing the expenditure patterns of traders was definitely challenging as responses solicited could only be rough indicators of expenditure patterns. Obtaining more detailed information on expenditure or incomes i.e. specific amounts was also challenging because of time constraints and privacy issues. So in the absence of these, percentages helped provide the most accurate picture of expenditure possible. Another check on validity of the data gathered was that it was possible to see if the views of different sets of actors made sense in relation to one another. This is not to say that their perspectives were the same - evidently they were not - but issues like African American preferences for certain types of crafts could be traced from different sources. These validity checks ensured that an accurate and deeper understanding of the material and a reasonable degree and volume of information was obtained from each tourism actor. The findings are discussed in the following chapters.

## **Chapter 5. Traders' Characteristics, Products and Perceptions of Tourists**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a variety of different perspectives on the interactions between traders and African American tourists. It begins by examining the nature of Ghanaian handicrafts, handicraft sellers and the crafts that they sell. It also investigates the patterns of sales and how tourists' handicraft purchases affect traders' livelihoods. The chapter then looks at the general characteristics of handicraft traders by providing a spatial analysis of handicraft activity at Elmina and Cape Coast castles and the Accra Arts Centre and a statistical and geographical analysis of the demography of this study sample. Finally, there is a discussion about how traders identify and perceive African American tourists.

### **5.2 Ghanaian Handicrafts**

This section will focus on the handicrafts that traders in Elmina, Cape Coast and Accra indicated were typically bought by African American tourists. It describes the main groups of items purchased and gives a breakdown of these items and the style of sale used by traders. The items indicated often form part of what is referred to as the '*combined handicraft*' method. This style of selling craft products involves combining two or more handicraft items such as jewellery beads, fabrics, sculptures, pictures, figurines and masks. This style is popular with craft sellers interviewed in the study as 52% of the sample engages in combined craft selling (Table 5.1). This style of selling has enabled handicraft traders to capitalize on the varied tastes of prospective craft buyers, and act as a one-stop shop for craft enthusiasts. The range of handicrafts purchased by tourists can be sub-divided into traditionally patterned items: Kente and Adinkra patterned cloth, Tie and Dye fabrics, Kumasi sandals and beaded jewellery.

Table 5.1 Crafts sold by handicraft traders in the Elmina and Cape Coast Castle areas

Type of trade	Number of handicraft traders	% of sample
Combined handicrafts	64	52
Jewellery beads	22	18
Fabric	16	13
Sculptures	7	5
Shells	5	4
Masks	4	3
Printed pictures	4	3
Drums	2	2
Total	124	100

### 5.2.1 Traditionally Patterned Items

Traditionally patterned or designed craft items form a large portion of the handicraft items sold amongst traders in all of the study areas (Cape Coast, Elmina, Accra, Koforidua and Odumasi-Krobo). It is important for the sales of handicraft sellers that items displayed are reflective of the country's heritage and tradition, as the Diaspora market interviewed has expressed a strong desire for indigenously-inspired souvenirs. Although displaying such items does not guarantee any purchases, it does ensure that traders will in the very least create an initial impression that is good enough to catch the attention of the heritage-seeking tourist. These items can consist of figurines, masks, fabric, musical instruments or any accessories that have been embellished with local symbols and designs or colours. The selling of traditionally patterned fabrics in particular has proved popular and was found to be the third most sold handicraft category overall, only surpassed by that of the 'combined crafts method' and beaded jewellery (Table 5.1). Amongst craft sellers in Cape Coast in particular, fabrics were the second most popular type of handicraft sold (Table 5.2). This is because there were more women there and fabric selling was found to be the second most popular form of craft sold by women (Table 5.2). Traditionally patterned fabrics include various kinds of apparel and adornments such as women's traditional shirts, trousers, shorts, skirts, necklaces, hats, headscarves, men's traditional shirts (Joromi), necklaces and Buubuu

Table 5.2 Crafts sold by location and gender

		Location		Gender	
Type of trade	Number	Elmina	Cape Coast	Male	Female
Combined crafts	64	44	20	46	18
Jewellery beads	22	12	10	17	5
Fabric	16	1	15	4	12
Sculptures	7	3	4	6	1
Shells	5	3	2	5	0
Masks	4	0	4	4	0
Printed pictures	4	0	4	4	0
Drums	2	0	2	2	0
Total	124	63	61	88	36

Dresses (clothing from Batik or Sheda). As mentioned, these patterns differ from those of Kente, Adinkra and Tie and Dye patterns, as they involve print designs (often non-symbolic) and colour combinations that are considered traditionally Ghanaian. For example funerary fabric (not commonly found amongst craft sellers) is usually found in shades of brown, dark red, dark orange, black, white and blue. The customary combinations of these colours in various shapes and patterns make the fabric appropriate for a funeral and differentiate it from other everyday-wear on the market. Fabric used by people of the Northern Region of Ghana (which is more commonly found amongst craft sellers) is also readily identified by the range of psychedelic colour combinations used. It is these dazzling hues that local craft sellers and local buyers use to identify them as ‘Northern colours’ or ‘Ntafuo colours’ (used by people of the North). Another example of traditionally patterned fabric is the ‘Sika Print’ (Money Print) fabric. These are fabrics that are lined or inlaid with gold. They have featured prominently in the past 10 years in the craft markets and general fabric markets and have gained popularity amongst tourists and locals alike, because of their visual appeal and their testament to



the country's once abundant gold reserves. The fabric business amongst craft sellers in Ghana is considered a versatile means of making a living because the fabrics can be made into a wide range of products that can cater to the local population as well as to tourists. Fabric sellers in the Arts Centre often appoint their own tailors and seamstresses in Accra and commission them to sew fabrics into various types of traditional attire for sale by traders. These tailors are usually freelance and run their businesses from their homes. These seamstresses or tailors function as both retailers and wholesalers in that they exist to cater to the requests of individual clients who ask for specific dresses to be made as well as to special clients who request bulk purchases for resale. Although unsewn fabrics can be purchased at the tailors, experienced buyers rarely do this, as prices of fabrics are much higher at a tailor's shop. Fabrics are usually purchased in bulk from large markets such as Makola in Accra and Kejetia in Kumasi, which is approximately four to five hours drive from the capital.

Some printed fabrics sold by craftsmen are also procured from manufacturers such as Akosombo Textiles Ltd (ATL; which produces Real Wax, African Fancy Prints and Polyester/Cotton dyed fabric for distribution and sale), Ghana Textile Manufacturing Company (GTMC), Ghana Textile Product (GTP) and Printex (Quartey 2006; Ghana Government Portal, 2012). These companies are the four main leading fabric manufacturers left at present, a decline from the 16 that existed in the 1970s (Quartey, 2006). Interviews with fabric traders at the Arts Centre and Craft markets at Elmina and Cape Coast found that a minor portion of their fabric stock is sourced from these local companies (some traders estimated this to be 20% of their stock). However, the majority of the craftsmen's stock consisted of cheaper imported fabrics which come both from West African countries such as Nigeria and Ivory Coast, and from South-East Asia (Quartey, 2006:138). Local factories that were previously spinning, weaving and printing fabrics can now only afford to print fabrics and most of their processed unprinted cotton is imported from countries such as Nigeria and China (Abdallah, 2010). Although the quality of locally produced fabrics prior to companies taking the import 'short cut' was considered better by most fabric traders interviewed, the wider variety of colours, designs and styles available from imported fabrics have made them more

appealing to traders and buyers alike (Quartey, 2006). Experienced fabric traders are able to distinguish between the original branded fabrics and imported branded products and the varying qualities in both.. The once flourishing textile industry has now been flooded with imports of cheaper Chinese textile products which have almost crippled the industry (Abdallah, 2010; Ghana Government Portal, 2012; Andoh and Elolo, 2012). It is somewhat ironic that factories that were once fighting against Chinese imports now have no other choice than to give in to using imported Chinese cotton fabric in order to keep their businesses running. To give the local manufacturers a fair chance to compete in the market place, proposals to increase tariffs on textile imports have been suggested (Quartey, 2006). But because of the current import tariffs (10-20%) that exist for raw materials that local textile manufacturers need for textile manufacture (Twum, 2009; ITA, 2011), manufacturers find it easier and more cost effective to import the finished product. Similarly Acquah (2013), who conducted a study on the role of visual arts and crafts industries in Ghana tourism development, found that 60% of the craftsmen he interviewed had also complained of the high cost of purchasing raw materials for craft production. So this is a problem which continues to affect craftsmen. So to avoid tariffs, fabric traders have now resorted to smuggling fabrics into the country (Andoh and Elolo, 2012). The numerous efforts by the government to curb the smuggling of such fabrics continue to be faced with setbacks such as corruption, trader resistance and patent and trademark imitations (Ghana Government Portal, 2012). Strategies have involved using the Anti Piracy Task Force, under the Ghana Ministry of Trade, and the police to seize illegal textiles from many fabric markets in the country. But according to Andoh and Elolo (2012), in some cases the authorities contribute to the problem by accepting bribes, as custom officials have been known to allow textile smugglers to enter the country with their goods at an increased export duty fee, thereby helping the trend grow stronger.

So though fabrics sold by craftsmen are ‘traditional’ in terms of their patterning, they are often foreign in terms of the origins of the raw materials used. Nonetheless, they are still favoured by many tourists and this tourist expenditure on fabrics does help to create some local jobs. Yet even these jobs are being lost at an alarming rate. According to the

General Secretary of the Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Union and Andoh and Elolo (2012), hundreds of jobs were lost in this department (Ghana Government Portal, 2012). Employment within the textile industry is said to have declined from 25,000 in 1975 to 5,000 in year 2000 (Quartey, 2006). The increasing international affiliations/origins of companies like ATL as well as imports made by the large fabric companies and individual traders mean that profits from textiles are not staying in the country.

### **5.2.2 Kente and Adinkra Patterned Cloth**

Kente (printed or woven) and Adinkra cloth are arguably the most sought after traditional fabrics. It is because of this that they have been singled out and will be discussed in more detail. One example of Kente's popularity amongst Diasporas is in the case of a recent cultural-exchange and investor-hunting trip made to Atlanta in the USA by Mr. Mohammed Adam, the Tamale Metropolitan Chief Executive, accompanied by a cultural group (GNA, 2008). The ensemble distributed traditional garments native to the Northern Region of Ghana and *Kente* to the office of the Mayor of Atlanta. The traditional ensembles created an intense wave of excitement and interest amongst African Americans, who purchased as well as made requests for more imports of such items. Kente is a traditional hand woven Ashanti fabric, usually made up of yellow, red, blue, green and black threads interwoven into checkered panel-like designs (Figure 5.1). It is available as a single, double or triple weave, where the triple weave is the heaviest and costliest. It is also made in different colour combinations but the iconic patterns remain the same.

According to traders at the Arts Centre, woven Kente fabrics in particular are almost as popular as jewellery beads in terms of their historical appeal to tourists. Like Adinkra cloth (Figure 5.2) and trade beads, Kente's readily identifiable motifs make them even more attractive. African American tourists interviewed often commented on the appeal that this 'imagery' has. This is because Kente is worn during festivals, ceremonies and other special occasions. Although Kente is Ashanti in origin, other tribes also value it



Figure 5.1 Hand woven Kente fabrics  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (May, 2013)

and make use of it in their ceremonial dress codes in some way or the other. The iconic Kente design has now become an unofficial national symbol and is used in many advertisements, banners and campaigns to represent Ghana. It is also readily identified as Ghanaian when worn abroad. The hand-woven Kente is by far the most popular and most expensive form of unsewn fabric purchased in the Arts Centre. Woven Kente is usually used for clothing, while commercialized Kente is more commonly adapted to any other crafts (for example bags, watches, bracelets, scarves, hats and many more). Commercialized Kente is usually constructed from cotton or linen and includes patterns that are 'printed' onto cotton or linen instead of woven into the fabrics. Its lightweight, versatility and affordability have made it a popular alternative to woven versions. Although the hand woven Kente are readily available for purchase (mostly in specialized fabric shops), they are not as mainstream as their commercialized counterparts. Observations found that African American tourists buy a myriad of textile paraphernalia including head bands and arm bands made from the Kente design.

Paraphernalia printed with symbols such as the '*Gye Nyame*' (Figure 5.3) is also popular. *Gye Nyame* literally means 'Except God' or 'Only God' and symbolizes the supremacy and power of the almighty God. It comes from the range of symbols called *Adinkra*, which means 'farewell' or 'goodbye' in the *Akan* language. These are cultural and proverbial symbols used especially by the Ashanti people in their cloth designs to



Figure 5.2 Cloth showing Adinkra designs.  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection  
(May, 2012)



Figure 5.3 Gye Nyame symbol  
Source: Adinkra, 2007

express sentiments on various ceremonial occasions. Informal and impromptu discussions with willing buyers found that Kente scarves, necklaces and unsewn Kente cloth were favourites amongst the female tourists. However due to the high costs charged for woven Kente, buyers tended only to purchase this in small quantities of two or three full pieces (6 yards and 12 yards) or in strips which are much more affordable. Kente strips are more popularly utilized as accompaniments to cultural attire, specifically as shoulder coverings, although they can also be used as a decorative wall hanging.

### 5.2.3 Tie and Dye Fabric

Tie and Dye is a unique way of forming a pattern or design on a fabric. It involves the methodical or impromptu tying of sections of a plain piece of fabric with a cord (string, rope, fabric, tie etc) and then dipping the entire piece into a coloured dye of the designer's choice. The tied sections or colour-blocked sections combined with the dyed sections form a unique marbled effect. Tie and Dye shirts, batik designs, Agadza suits (a 3 piece suit) and Smocks (locally named Batakari) are the most popular Tie and Dye

products sold. Most fabrics sold in the Cape Coast sample were Tie and Dye and block printed fabrics. These, according to the sellers interviewed, are considered by buyers as very traditional and authentic, as they are usually hand designed and not machine mass produced.

#### **5.2.4 Kumasi Sandals and Beaded Jewellery**

Another important handicraft type is Kumasi Leather Sandals. Interviews with sandal sellers revealed that these sandals originate from Kumasi, a city in the Ashanti Region famed for its manufacturing of a wide range of crafts. The popularity of these sandals which are known for their strength, durability and light weight has spread and extended to the capital city, and as a result, craftsmen have reproduced replicas. There is no official date on when these sandals were first introduced in Accra or when mass production began. However sellers interviewed explained that any newly introduced items that are believed to have great sales potential were bought in bulk from their ‘agents’, who they in turn trusted to provide them with the most ‘saleable’, fashionable and attractive items. Then if desired, any adaptations would be made to suit the ‘Accra market. At the time of research, these sandals had gained popularity in the Accra crafts sector and many sellers had included them in their other sales products.

These freelancers (mostly unregistered itinerant traders) also sell the ‘Accra-versions’ of the sandals to handicraft sellers in the Arts Centre. The original sandals from Kumasi are usually decorated with Kente and real leather but newer (and less expensive) versions have been redesigned with glass and plastic beads, and these have proved very popular. Bare versions are also procured by itinerant and some Art Centre traders, and further embellishments are made. For instance Mr. Opoku Adutwum, an Arts Centre trader, explained that he would often purchase undecorated Leather Sandals and decorate them with commercial glass beads or Kente fabric that he already had. This, according to him, was a cost-effective method of improving the product range and attracting African American tourists.

### 5.2.5 Beaded Jewellery

Beaded jewellery is the most popular ‘single’ handicraft item sold by traders in the study sample, and the item most purchased by African American tourists (Figure 5.4). Beaded jewellery is considered a fast seller and as a result has a significant presence in the study sample, either as the only item sold or as part of the combined craft methods amongst a large number of respondents. In other words, the majority of crafts sellers interviewed included beaded jewellery or beaded crafts among their tourist products. Some traders have even changed their products from selling sculptures to the selling of jewellery beads and fabrics because of a strong demand for these items by African American tourists (discussed further in Chapter 6). Beaded jewellery usually takes the form of bracelets, necklaces, anklets, earrings and waist beads although some other types exist. Beads traditionally comprise of spherical shaped pieces of material, such as glass, plastic, metal, bone or wood that is pierced for stringing or threading. Their sizes range from that of a grain of rice to that of a golf ball. Other shapes include flat discs or cubes. Jewellery found amongst craft sellers are made with various materials such as cowry shells, leather, sea shells, fabrics, bamboo, bones (rare) and raffia.

The most sought after beads are trade beads, but the most purchased beaded jewellery is the kind made with glass beads in the form of wrist bangles, necklaces and earrings. According to Mr. K. Kunadu (a trader at the Arts Centre), the popularity of glass beads is mainly due to its affordability, but also its durability. He went on to explain that buyers can purchase beaded jewellery in bulk and take them back to the USA. This is more difficult with Kente, because even three yards of Kente is quite heavy and expensive. As stated, it is the more costly antique beads that are the most desired by Diaspora tourists. This is attributed to history and their presumed ‘terrestrial origins’ (Interviews, Mr. K. Kunadu and Mr. Charles Osei, craft sellers at the Arts Centre). The beads were used by slave traders to barter for slaves and other valuable commodities during the era of the slave-trade and so there is an emotional attachment and respect for these beads amongst the Diaspora (Interview, Ms. Regina, craft seller at the Arts Centre, February 2012). The popularity of jewellery beads is further shown below. Table 5.3





Figure 5.4 Glass beads on display at the Koforidua craft market  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

represents the range of craft items purchased by African American tourists, as mentioned by traders<sup>12</sup>, and the status of jewellery beads within the craft purchasing market (either as the only item purchased in any single transaction or as part of a group of purchases). Overall 35% of respondents stated that African American tourists purchased beaded jewellery more than any other item, while another 32% stated that jewellery beads were always included as part of the multiple items purchased in any

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<sup>12</sup> Free range was given to handicraft traders to express what they felt was the most popular item purchased by these tourists; be it a single item or multiple, this accounted for the existence of multiple answers.



Table 5.3 Handicraft items bought by African American tourists

Item(s) mostly bought	Number of respondents	% of sample
Beaded jewellery only	43	35
Non bead items		
Fabrics only	17	14
Masks only	8	6
Shells only	7	6
Sculptures only	5	4
Drums only	4	3
Pictures (paintings) only	3	2
Multiple items mentioned*	37	32
Total	124	99**

\*Of the multiple items mentioned, jewellery beads featured significantly amongst them

\*\*Table: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

single transaction. This means that according to the majority of the respondents (65%), beaded jewellery has a significant and recurring place in the shopping items of African American customers. This is also supported by responses from African American tourists interviewed on this subject matter. When asked what craft items they would purchase from local traders and why, over 80% of the interviewees included jewellery beads as part of those items.

### 5.3 Beads Sold by Arts Centre Traders

Initial observation of traders' stalls at the Arts Centre found that the beads sold consist of two main kinds:

1. Locally-made beads such as glass powder beads, recycled transparent beads, translucent beads, Bodom imitations and Chevron imitations

2. Foreign beads: European trade beads, Malian clay beads, Kenyan beads, Togolese beads, and Chinese glass beads amongst others.

These can be further categorized:

1. Commercial beads (man-made) – derived from broken glass /bottles (made by Ghanaians in Koforidua). For example Ghana-made glass beads
2. Antique trade beads – believed by traders interviewed to have been retrieved and created through natural processes in the earth and picked out of the earth like shells from the sands of the beach. For instance, coffee beads.

### **5.3.1 The Origin of Beads in West Africa: the Krobo People and Antique Trade Beads**

Prior to colonization by European powers, Africans made their own beads from seeds, shells, bones, wood, clay and metal (Carey, 1991; Francis, 1994). Ghana during that period was more noted for metal bead work (using the lost wax technique) and stone bead work (using bauxite: a reddish aluminum ore) which is still evident in many of the local bead markets today. The oldest glass beads found in West Africa are believed to have been imported from Europe and India (Carey, 1991), which were then traded to West Africa by Arab traders. The Arabs often traded essentials such as salt, minerals and glass beads in exchange for slaves and gold (Francis, 1994). According to Dubin (1995), Africans on the West Coast traded with Europeans in the late 1400s, which saw countless glass beads of European origin (including the Venetian trade beads) entering the coastal regions. These were believed to have accounted for “40% of total imports or 2.5 pounds of glass beads for every man, woman and child each year” (Francis, 1994:105). In addition and with the help of the large amounts of glass beads that were being imported into the continent, Africans made their own, but they would involve redesigning or re-molding existing imported beads into the desired shape. Ghanaians are credited with powder glass bead production as early as the seventeenth century (Francis, 1994).



Figure 5.5 Chevron trade bead  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

### **5.3.2 The Krobo People and Trade Beads**

The Krobo people, who originate from Odumasi-Krobo, are known historically as the pioneers of the bead culture and are some of the most skilled bead makers on the continent (OSEC, 2009) with 'documented' bead use going back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. They are mainly farmers, who use bead production as an additional form of economic support. Beads play a vital role in traditional Krobo society and are used as symbols and adornments in the various stages of life, including birth, coming of age ceremonies, marriage and death (OSEC, 2009). Although beads are found throughout the country and utilized by almost all tribes in various ways, their origins are usually attributed to the Krobo people.

One of the most popular historical accounts by Ghanaians of the Krobo people and their bead culture is their encounter with European beads prior to colonization. The local

chiefs who had only seen beads made from natural materials and objects became fascinated by the colourful craftsmanship of the ceramic beads introduced by the merchants. The European merchants then traded with the Krobo people, specifically their Chiefs, exchanging their beads for slaves. It is important to note that this trade was not limited to the Krobo people, as historical records have shown that trade also took place with the Ashanti people, who obtained significant quantities and varieties of the Millefiori Venetian trade bead (Carey, 1991). According to the General Secretary of the Beads and Crafts Market Association (BCMA), Mr. Mohammed, a single Chevron bead (a common bartering bead) could be traded in the past (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) for as many as seven slaves. The number of slaves was usually determined by the number of layers on a Chevron bead (Figure 5.5) as explained by another informant:

*“It [the Chevron Bead] was so highly valued that the number of layers in the Chevron bead would determine the number of slaves that could be bartered for, like the one I show you now. It has seven layers, which would obviously buy seven people as slaves, so there is a whole lot of sentimental attachment to this bead by African Americans”.*

(Interview, Mr. Nomada Djaba, owner of Cedi Beads Industry, March 2012)

As the fascination with foreign beads grew, locals began to bury them, afraid that other locals would discover them and steal them (Interview, Mr. F. Mohammed, crafts seller at Arts Centre, March 2012). After many years after their buriers died, many bead burial grounds were soon forgotten about or couldn't be found and are only being discovered centuries later, in the same way that hordes of coins are sometimes found in other parts of the world. This created the popular Ghanaian myth that ancient beads which were discovered in the soil were actually created or originated from the soil and could multiply or germinate more beads (Carey, 1991) in the same way that gold is mined. Research indicates that it is likely that (in addition to people burying beads for fear of theft) these beads were also excavated from burial sites or forgotten shrines (Carey, 1991). According to Mr. Abbey, a handicraft seller and art gallery owner in Aburi, beads excavated today are polished (using olive oil or the water and stone surface method) to remove sand and soil residue prior to being sold in the markets.

Table 5.4 Bead sellers by location and gender

Bead only and beads + others				
Jewellery bead sellers	Located in Elmina		Located in cape coast	
64	45		19	
Gender distribution	32 male	13 female	14 male	3 female

#### **5.4 The Traders of Elmina Castle, Cape Coast Castle and the Accra Arts Centre: General Characteristics**

There are approximately 63 craft sellers in the Elmina study area. The spatial distribution of handicraft traders in Elmina is such that most handicraft activity is strategically located close to the castle grounds (Figure 5.6). Still a smaller number of craft sellers can be found in a limited number of three-star hotels in the area (KEEA, 2003). Elmina craft traders are mainly located in the courtyard outside the main entrance to the castle and close to the fishing dock. With the exception of the souvenir shops within the castle, two kiosks (stationed permanently) and several itinerant hawkers and shell traders were the main sources of handicraft in the immediate vicinity. The remaining handicraft vendors were located and spread a distance down the main street leading to the castle. They are a bit scattered and in the case of hawkers, are occasionally itinerant. Most respondents who sold beads (whether solely or as part of combined sales method) were located in Elmina (Table 5.4). The castle courtyard space also serves as a temporary car park for tourists to station their vehicles (either hired taxis or tour buses) and disembark for the castle. Also the larger amount of courtyard space at Elmina and the proximity of the local market create an open-air effect that encourages free flow of trade. At Cape Coast the location of the 61 traders sampled is similar to that of Elmina in terms of their proximity to the castle, but interestingly some of the handicraft traders are also situated within the castle in an open courtyard near the entrance/exit (Figure 5.7). A high cement wall surrounding the castle as seen in the

image, encapsulates ten officially designated handicraft traders/shops (curios<sup>13</sup>). Several more traders are located just outside the entrance and the rest scattered at vantage points across the street (Figure 5.8) and down the road leading to the town centre and shopping district. In Accra, the main focus of research was at the Arts Centre. The centre is located off the high street in central Accra, opposite the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Mausoleum. The Arts Centre is a wide open space consisting of almost 300 handicraft sellers who are spread throughout the grounds of the centre (Figure 5.9). The Art Centre not only sells crafts but has a food/restaurant area, a craft production section, an administrative area, an art gallery, auditorium, a herbal centre and an information shop.

#### **5.4.1 Style of Sales Stands Used by Traders**

In Ghanaian society, like many others, the physical appearance of one's business is considered vital to its success. Sellers are aware of the tourists' desire for quality in all things and as such make an effort to tailor their commercial appearance to such standards, in spite of its size or shape. There are four main styles of stands used by craft sellers in the study: mini-shops, stalls or kiosks, table top sellers (Figure 5.12) and tray sellers (Figure 5.10). Mini-shops are quite common in Ghana, not just as craft stores but as stores for the sale of all goods and services. They can be considerably more expensive than smaller wooden makeshift structures such as kiosks, and are usually non-portable and their use involves the payment of more formal taxes and fees. Kiosks are fashioned in a range of sizes. The smallest is about the size of a phone booth, while the largest is usually double or triple that size. Table 5.5 provides brief descriptions of the range of stall structures used. Field work found that overall mini shops were the selling structure used most by the preliminary study sample in Elmina and Cape Coast. Other actors in the commodity chain such as Arts Centre traders made use of all types of trading structures (not tabulated). However mini shops were the most seen.

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<sup>13</sup> The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), refer to these shops as *Curio shops* (see website [www.ghanamuseums.org](http://www.ghanamuseums.org)), suggesting that they sell unique and unconventional objects. Observations revealed that items sold, rather mimic the standard range of handicraft items sold at most locations than offer anything unusual

Interestingly, these shops were wooden structures that were embedded within a larger wooden shed-like structure which housed them (Figure 5.12). Traders in other craft markets such as Koforidua had a similar structure to that of the Arts Centre. The market also has two large open-air shed-like structures which have been divided into approximately 60 smaller compartments/sections which act as mini shops (Figure 5.13). In front of this structure are stalls and tables (with and without umbrellas) (Figure 5.14).

While some mini shop owners also own these stalls or tables, in some cases other sellers use the space in front of the mini shop to sell their own crafts. In some instances, some sellers do not use a structure at all but simply lay their beads on the floor for display. Over several visits it was found that some of the compartments were unoccupied with the majority of sellers using the stalls or table structures. Traders in Elmina however made more use of stalls or kiosks than any other selling structure (Table 5.6). In this category almost half of the respondents (51%) used them. Mini shops were more widely used in Cape Coast (67%). Some of this is the result of the availability of shop space embedded within the structure of the castle, which was allocated to handicraft sellers as part of the marketing of the heritage of the Castle. A gender-based analysis showed that mini shops were the most popular for both sexes. Though it is evident that the sturdiness of a shop compared to a kiosk would prove popular amongst sellers, the financial challenge of attaining and maintaining shops is a problem for many. There is some evidence to suggest that the structure of stores has affected handicraft purchases in some way. Tourists interviewed agreed that the 'kind' of structure used is often a deciding factor when it comes to purchasing a craft item. They explained that this is because they have come to realize that the larger shops are over-pricing their products and so prefer to steer clear of stylish-looking stores. This issue was also a topic of concern in interviews with African American tourists, who have often found themselves at the receiving end of 'the tourist price'. Yet, some tourists prefer the more high-end stores or 'credible' shops so as to avoid buying counterfeit or low quality goods and avoid being ripped off. Tour operators interviewed (as discussed in chapter 8) in their opinion, their observations of their clients suggested that all kinds of traders are visited and that tourists are not finicky or fastidious about the kind of structures that they shop at.

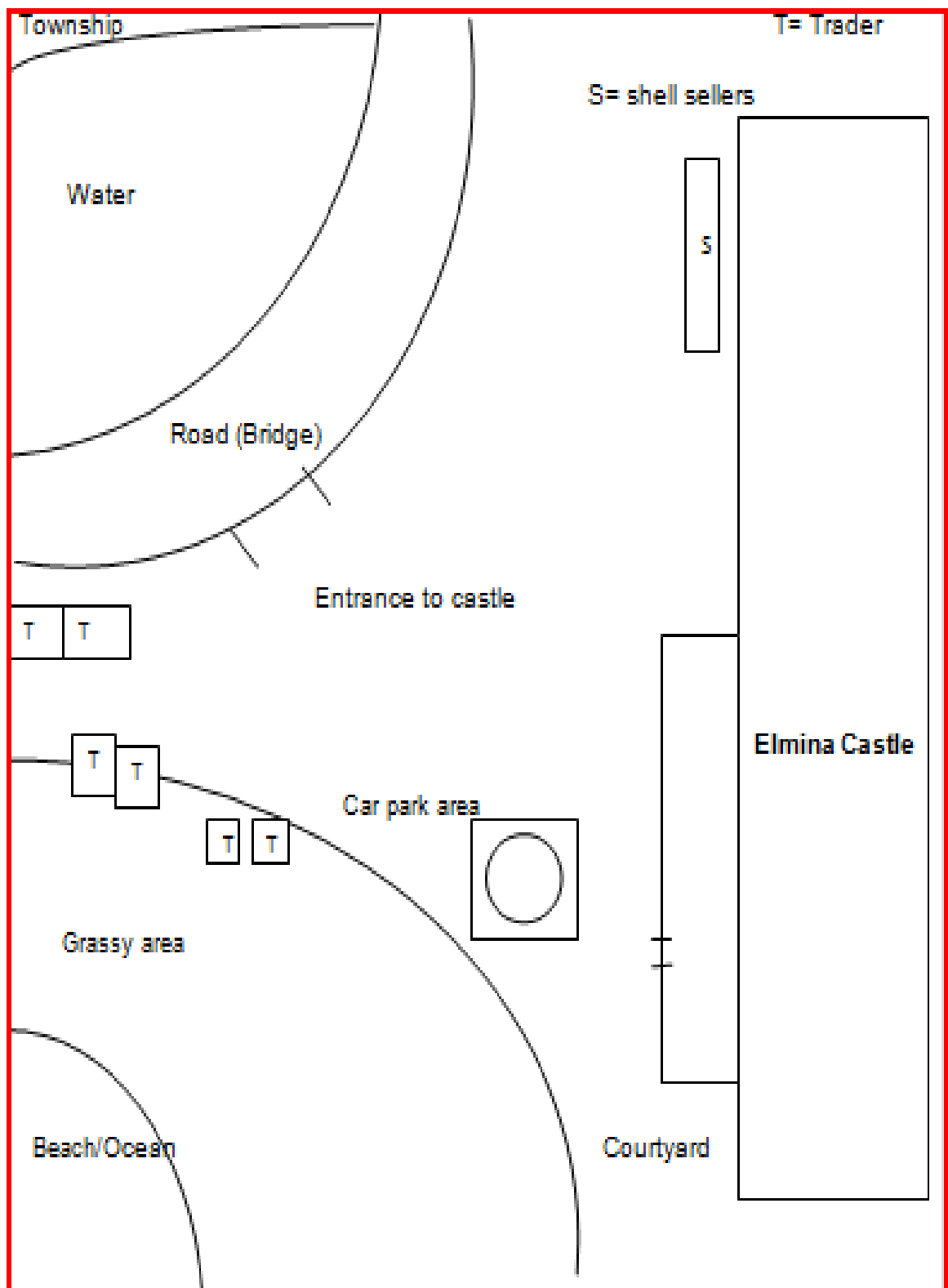


Figure 5.6 Sketch map of craft activity at Elmina Castle (Diagram not to scale)





Figure 5.7 Mini shops in the Cape Coast Castle  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (February, 2012)

But this is perhaps because tourists tend to trust their operator's suggestion of the best possible place to shop and therefore are less likely to be overly skeptical. In sum, no specific style of stall is winning the battle. The larger shops are just as easily discriminated against. So although it may seem as if the larger more 'reputable' stores should have a competitive advantage for being the most trustworthy, it is more likely that stall owners who are not classified as too expensive or too cheap, will benefit. In terms of capitalizing on tourist demand, mini shops and stalls or kiosks are at some disadvantage because they are stationary/fixed structures and thus do not possess the mobility that itinerant sellers have. They have no other choice than to wait in the hopes that tourists will approach their shops. On a few occasions where observations were being made, stall owners were heard calling out to tourists nearby, but this did not encourage them to approach their structures.

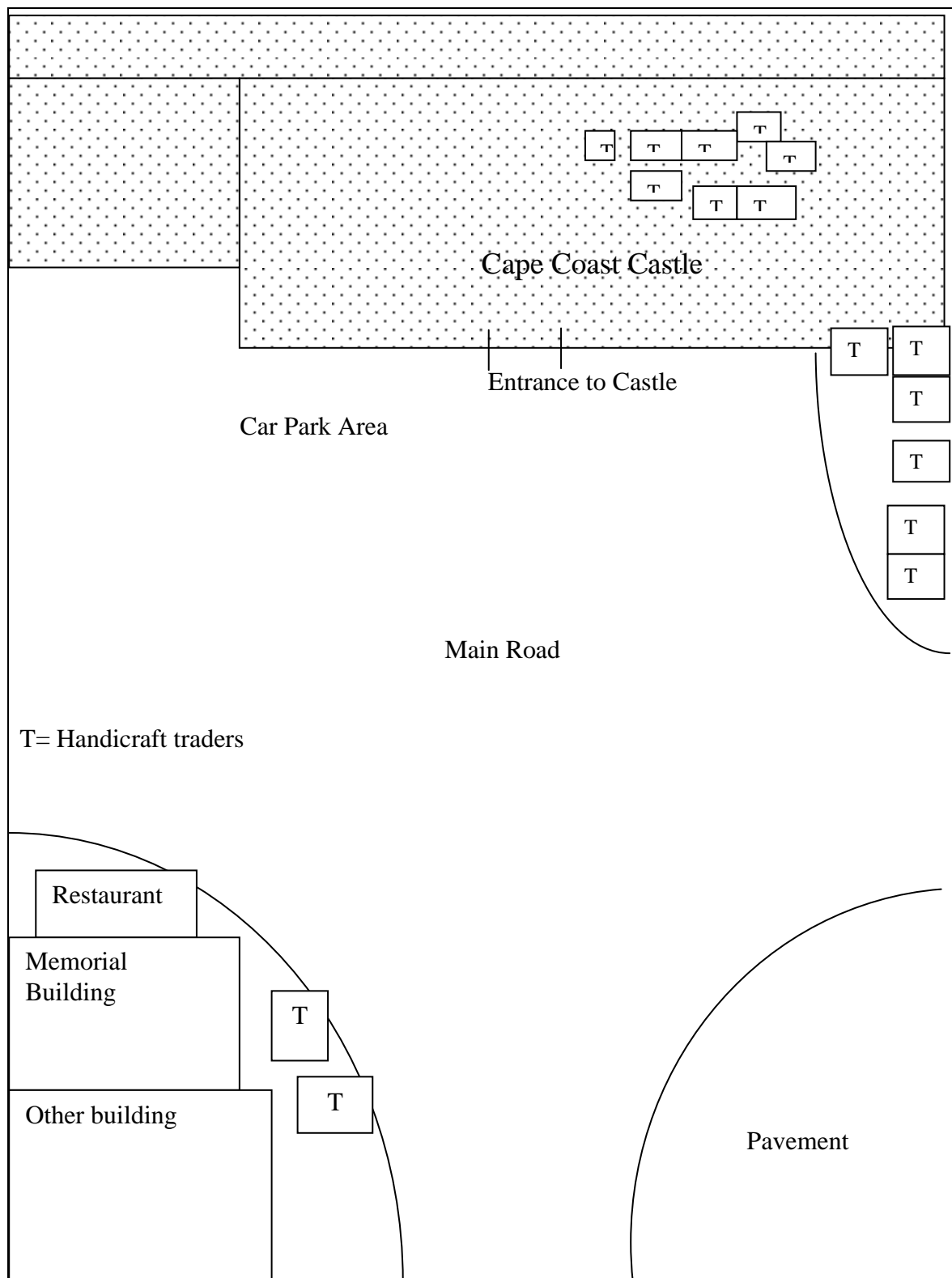


Figure 5.8 Sketch map of craft activity inside and outside the Cape Coast castle

Table 5.5 Descriptions of selling structures used by craft traders

Type of trade	Description	Source
Kiosk/stall	A small structure, usually free standing, open on one or more sides such as a hut, stand or cubicle	Observation of traders on site
Shop (mini)	Smaller shop usually freestanding or housed in a larger exterior structure	
Basin seller	Sellers who display their goods in a metallic bowl/basin often positioned on the floor or held by the trader.	
Table top	Sellers who displays their goods on a makeshift wooden table	

Itinerant sellers who have the upper hand in this situation are faced with the issue of being reproached as ‘aggressive’ sellers, a characteristic that their mobility only enhances.

## 5.4.2 Handicraft Traders’ Demographic Profile

### 5.4.2.1 Gender

According to the Ghana Living Standards Survey (2008), around 15% of the local working population (aged 15-64) is engaged in trade which they categorize as –“the buying and selling of goods”<sup>14</sup>. Of these, 21% are engaged in some form of ‘craft and

<sup>14</sup> The survey does not specify which trade but explains that trade in this case mean the buying and selling of any goods

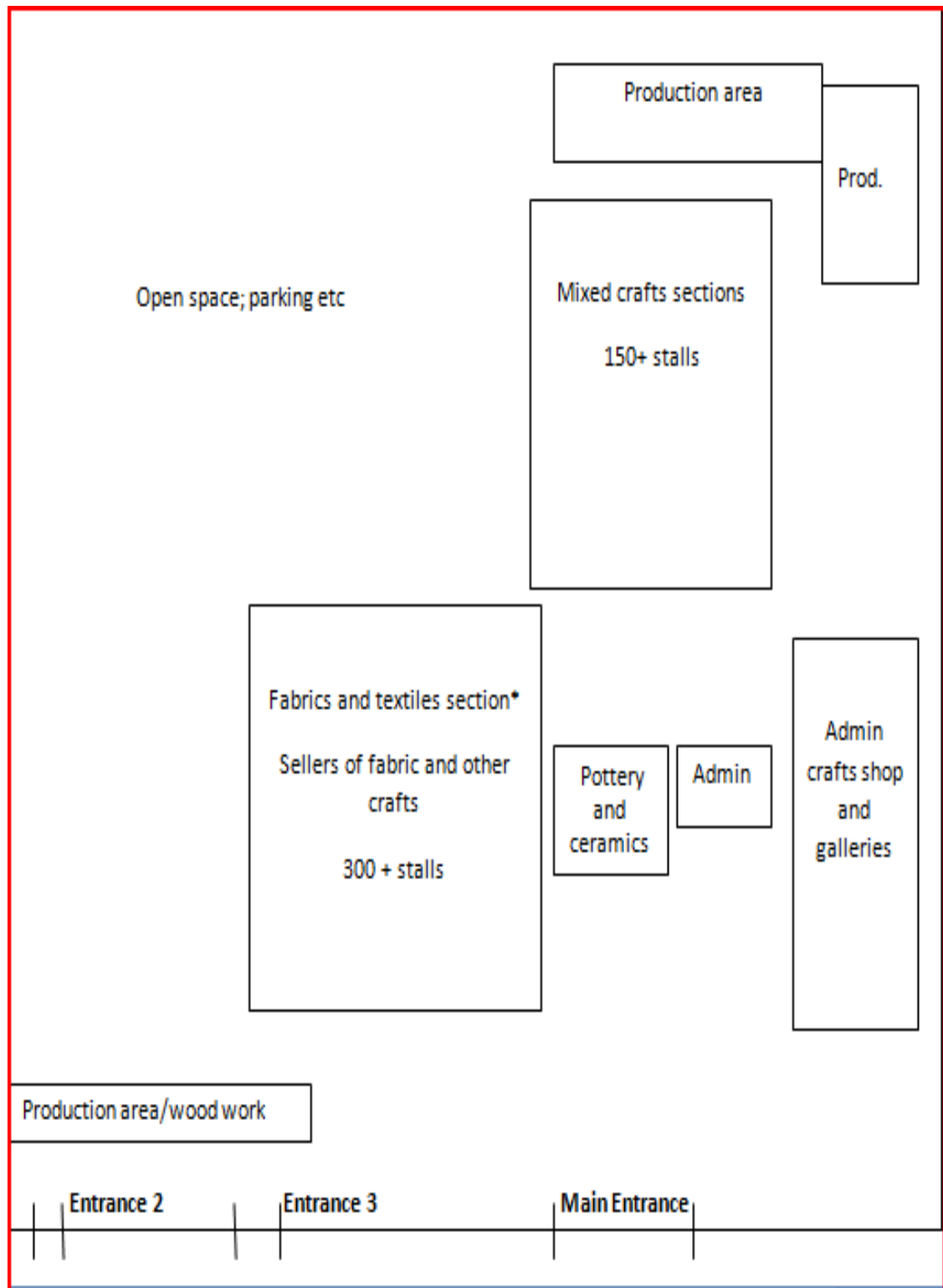


Figure 5.9 Diagram map of the Accra Arts Centre



Figure 5.10 Itinerant trader selling handicrafts on a tray  
Source: Researcher's personal collection (December 2009)



Figure 5.11 Craft items displayed on a table top  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (February, 2012)





Figure 5.12 Mini shops at the Accra Arts Centre  
Source: Researchers Personal Collection (September, 2012)



Figure 5.13 Mini shops at the Koforidua Market  
Source: Researchers Personal Collection (September, 2012)

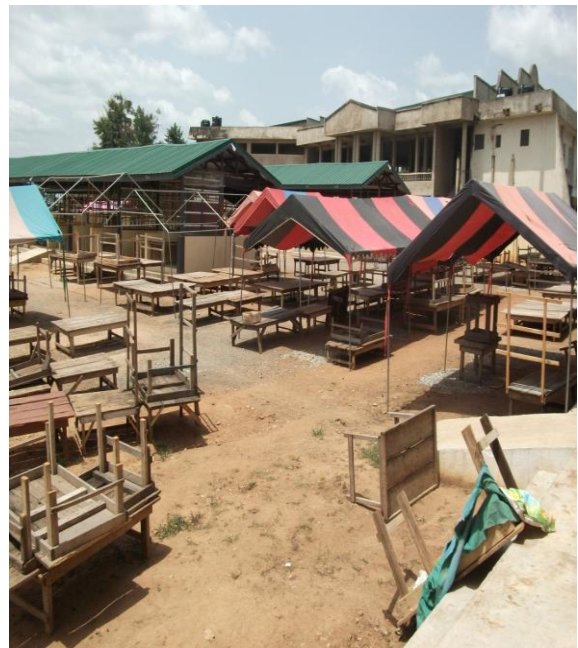


Figure 5.14 Stalls and tables at the Koforidua Crafts Market  
Source: Researchers Personal Collection (September, 2012)

Table 5.6 Style of sale stands by location

Type of structure	Cape Coast respondents		Elmina respondents		Total number of respondents	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mini shop	41	67	14	22	55	44
Kiosk/stall	12	20	32	51	44	35
Table top	8	13	7	11	15	12
Tray (itinerant)	0	0	10	16	10	8
Total	61	100	63	100	124	99*

\* Table: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

Table 5.7 Style of sale stands by gender

	Male		Female		Total number of respondents	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mini shop	38	43	17	47	55	44
Kiosk/stall	30	34	14	39	44	35
Table top	13	15	2	6	15	12
Tray (itinerant)	7	8	3	8	10	8
Total	88	100	36	100	124	99*

\*Table: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

related trades' (GLSS 5, 2008:37), of whom 13% are female and just over 8% male (GLSS 5, 2008). However, my observations in Elmina, Cape Coast, Koforidua and Accra found that the handicraft trade is a male-dominated industry. Of the 124 traders interviewed in Elmina and Cape Coast, 88 were men (71%) and 36 (29%) were women. Sixty seven percent of the Cape Coast Castle sample was male and 33% were female, while in Elmina 75% were male and 25% were female. When it comes to bead and non-bead sellers, men are predominant in each category (Tables 5.8 and 5.9). This

corresponds with earlier findings by Peil (1979) in her study *West African Urban Craftsmen* who also found that men dominated handicraft trade in most of the handicraft centres that she researched. In the current study it was found that the Arts Centre and the Koforidua Craft Market in particular have a significant number of male craftsmen. Observations in the Arts Centre suggested that for every twenty sellers, about thirteen were men: roughly two-thirds. These included the wood carving production sections which were male-dominated, and the fabrics section which was a mixture of both male and female sales persons. Most of the fabric shops in the Arts Centre (like many shops in Ghana) had at least two sales personnel. In a few cases there were two women looking after the shops, while in most cases both sexes acted as shop keepers. In some cases fabric shops, selling hand-woven Kente, only had men at the helm.

This was because in Ghana, Kente weaving (especially in Bonwire) is mostly done by men and as a result often sold by them. The Koforidua Crafts market also had a large male predominance at 70%. These patterns are in contrast to theories of females dominating informal trade and craft selling in Ghana (GLSS 5, 2008), in other African countries (CIGS, 1998), in the general market trade (Dune and King, 2003), in non-agricultural informal trade in sub-Saharan Africa (UNECA, 2010) and in vulnerable employment (ILO, 2011). The sale of foodstuffs in Ghana however is still dominated by women. For example in the case of Agormenya market (a general goods market which has dedicated almost a fifth of its market space to beads), the market consists almost entirely of women. This is because of the traditionally gendered roles of women in the sale of food stuffs in the market scene. The average age of all respondents was 32 years but there was a striking difference between men and women with the average age of females at 38 compared with males at 29. This older female demographic was observed in female traders who engaged in business in mini shops and kiosks rather than those selling on basins or table top counters. It is likely that the itinerant nature of the tray or basin sellers is due to the fact that they are unable at first and when young to afford the stalls and are confined to being itinerant. It is also easier to be itinerant when young as it is quite a physical process.



Table 5.8 Craft sellers by gender

Beads only		Beads and others		Non-bead sellers	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
11	3	36	14	41	19
14		50		60	
124 (total)					

Table 5.9 Bead sellers by gender

Items sold			
Beads only		Beads only and Beads & others	
Male	Female	Male	Female
11	3	46	16
14		62	

One interviewee said that basin sellers are thought to be less privileged than sellers who own a stall and that they are also assumed to be new to the business, as selling using a tray is considered as a way to break into the craft trade, especially for the youth market (Interview, craft trader at Elmina, July 2010).

### 5.5 Identifying the African American Tourist; Handicraft Trader Perspectives

During the pilot study it was found, as might be expected, that asking traders about African Americans required that they were able to identify them. One question asked was therefore simply, *‘how do you identify an African American?’* The first question that sought to assess tourist identification methods was open-ended and sellers were allowed to provide as many answers or descriptions as they felt appropriate. For simplification purposes and based on the style of responses, results were grouped into three main response types; ‘single characteristic identifiers’ (SCI), ‘dual characteristic identifiers’ (DCI) and multiple characteristic identifiers (MCI) (Table 5.10). For SCIs, results saw six main categories of tourist identifications emerge: skin complexion,

clothing (type and style), language (speech and accent), personality, mannerism (gestures and unique actions) and hairstyle. DCIs saw various combinations of each of the six categories while MCIs formed a single category in which handicraft traders used three or more categories to identify tourists. Interviews with traders concluded that although a majority of respondents (60%) utilized single characteristic identifiers, almost 40% made use of a combination of various physical characteristics and observations to identify a 'black American' tourist.

A tourist's 'language' (speech, accent or intonation) as an SCI was found to be the most used factor in identifying or recognizing an African American tourist overall. Discussions with handicraft traders revealed that familiarity with the 'American accent' (from other tourists and media such as T.V.) was a key factor in their confidence in mentioning 'language' as a factor, as several respondents commented on the fact that tourists 'sounded American' or that 'they had an American accent'. In the Elmina sample, however, although language was also considered vital in their identification amongst eleven respondents, it was the DCI of 'hairstyle and language' that was mentioned by a larger portion of the sample (14). Seven percent of handicraft traders stated an MCI of skin colour, clothing, hairstyle and language was their main characteristic package of identifying African American tourists.

The 'colour' of the tourist's skin or complexion also played a role in their recognition of African Diasporas as 15% of overall respondents noted 'skin complexion' as their means of identification and another 8% who had DCIs as responses stated 'skin complexion' as one of these DCIs. During further queries it was determined that this classification by respondents was quite subjective, as 'skin complexion' in the classification of African American tourists referred to how *dark* or how *light* their complexion was. It was also ascertained that the comparison of African Americans with other foreign tourists, as well as their often being placed in the same category as Caucasian tourists (see Chapter Four) had significant impact on why 'skin complexion' was a characteristic. The *Americanization* of these tourists (whether African or American or Caucasian) and its significance seemed to overshadow their African

heritage and appear in the forefront of physical identification.

As briefly explained in Chapter four, in the case of African American clothing, the abundance of colourful beads, the use of traditional fabrics, styles, turbans and other adornments were considered key in their overall identification and assessment. This was also mirrored in the sample as 12% of the overall trader sample considered ‘clothing’ a conspicuous symbol for Diasporas. Although clothing was a popular indicator of a tourist’s ethnicity, it could not be utilized as a sole means of identification of ethnicity of any tourists. Caucasians, African Americans and Africans all utilize traditional African apparel in different quantities and for different objectives. However, using ‘clothing style’ as an indicator was more commonly used for African American tourists than for Caucasian tourists.

This is because during field work at the Arts Centre, the African American Association of Ghana, the Koforidua Crafts Market and the W.E.B Dubois Centre, it was observed that most Diaspora tourists were clothed in traditional apparel from head to toe; this conspicuously set them apart from the local population, who adopt a more casual western style. This is supported by Mwakikagile (2005:21), who describes observing African American tourists whilst in his homeland of Tanzania;

*“We knew they were black Americans... we could tell from their accent, the attire, and many times from the way they looked that they were Americans, and not black Africans born and brought up in Africa...”*

*“They had their own look...easily detectable by us; their Afro hair style, which most local residents didn't have; and even colorful dashikis they wore which most people in Tanzania didn't wear like they do in West Africa”.*

So these examples indicate that the ‘degree’ and ‘objective’ of usage of ethno-cultural symbolisms is significant in identifying Diaspora tourists. Overall, mannerism (6%), personality (1%) and hairstyle (5%) as SCIs were the least popular indicators in the overall sample. More conspicuous physical characteristics were considered key in handicraft traders identifying an African American tourist.

Table 5.10 Characteristics used by traders in identifying an African American

	Cape Coast Castle area	Elmina Castle area	Total	%
SCI				
Language	15	11	26	21
Complexion	15	3	18	15
Clothing	11	4	15	12
Mannerism	6	1	7	6
Hairstyle	0	6	6	5
Personality	1	0	1	1
DCI				
Hairstyle and language	0	14	14	11
Speech and complexion	6	3	9	7
Clothing and language	1	7	8	6
Language and mannerisms	2	2	4	3
Clothing and mannerism	1	2	3	2
Mannerisms and complexion	1	0	1	1
Clothing and hair	0	1	1	1
MCI				
Multiple*	0	9	9	7
Data not available	2	0	2	2
Total	61	63	124	100

\*Multiple: speech, mannerisms, hair and clothing

These responses were considered adequate in the sense that the traders were confident that they could pick out African American tourists. In Ghana (like many countries around the world) making assumptions about a person's ethnicity or nationality based on certain common facial or physical characteristics attributed to a particular nationality or ethnic group is very common. The results here support the many cultural theories and ethno-visual concepts that have been used by many Ghanaians in distinguishing

people<sup>15</sup>. For example, an individual is presumed to be Nigerian because of a certain tribal mark or facial features that people of Ghana know to be common to a certain Nigerian ethnic group. Some may also relate a person's tribe to their height or skin complexion. This is not to say the Ghanaians do not have similar distinguishing marks themselves, but informal discussions with traders found that locals have specific historical knowledge and experiences in tribalism and ethnicity that makes them particularly efficient at identifying and distinguishing amongst the tribal groups. So the African American similarly is identified by their distinct accent, complexion and clothing.

## **5.6 General Views on African American Tourists**

During interviews with handicraft traders, respondents were asked what their thoughts, experiences and first impressions were of African American tourists. Traders were given this open-ended question to ascertain their initial perceptions of their main target market and how these impressions impact on the commercial discourse with their customers. A range of views were given, from those that impacted on trader earnings such as infrequent purchases or visits to more socially-related responses such as friendliness and talkativeness (Table 5.11). Those responses that did not have a direct affect on trader income (friendliness, product critiques, talkativeness, anti-social behaviour and cultural pride) will be discussed here while those that directly affect trader earning and expenditure (including gift giving) are discussed in Chapter six.

### **5.6.1 Controversies Surrounding Handicraft Products**

This was the second most mentioned category in the sample. The 'excessive' queries and comments made by tourists were sometimes found to be annoying for traders. This concern did not feature significantly amongst Art Centre respondents but was more

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<sup>15</sup> 'Ethno-visual', a term found in the art of visual communication and the Graphic arts (see Schiffman, 1994), in this context refers to the common practice in Ghana of ethnic profiling of individuals by using facial characteristics and/or skin colour/ tone as a basis for determining one's ethnicity.

Table 5.11 Trader views of African American tourists

Views on tourists	Number of respondents	% of sample
Infrequent purchases/visits	31	25
Critical about product*	29	23
Frequent buyers	24	19
Cultural pride	10	8
Give gifts	10	8
Talkative	10	8
Friendly	8	6
Suspicious about prices	2	2
Grand total	124	99**

\* Critical of craft products means excessive querying and commenting on product quality etc

\*\* Table: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding

conspicuous in the Cape Coast/Elmina sample. Traders interviewed in this category explained this practice had been going on for a long time and that this constant questioning was often interpreted by them as tourists being dissatisfied with the product. Most of the queries were related to the origin of the product, the processes involved in its production and the quality of the materials used.

*“They buy a lot from me, but also ask a lot of questions about the product and how it was made and why we all have the same thing”*

(Interview, Male trader, craft seller at Cape Coast, April 2010)

*“One seller heard that they ask a lot of questions about the product when buying and it annoys other sellers, but seller believes it’s their right to query products”*

(Interview, Male trader crafts seller at Elmina, May 2010)

Traders believed that in some instances customers were trying to assess whether the product was worth purchasing;

*“They like to look and analyze the product for a long time before purchase, like*

*they don't trust us"*

(Interview, Female, fabrics seller at Cape Coast, April 2010)

*"Offer more variety in the items sold. Know the background/history of the item. Tourists want to feel like they have authentic items crafted just for them"*

(Interview, Ms. J. Addai, African American tourist, January 2012)

The controversy surrounding the craft products was mainly about issues related to authenticity, quality and uniqueness of crafts. This is an important issue in academia as issues concerning the interpretation of heritage and authenticity and how the two are functioning in the touristic environment (Timothy and Boyd, 2003) as well as the tourists experience of authenticity and how it is interpreted and experienced and the impacts of these on the touristic experience (Shaw and Williams, 2003) has been an important part of tourism debates. In the discussion group session, one emergent theme was the dissatisfaction with the low quality of goods made in Ghana and the frustration with the saturation of foreign goods in the local market, especially those imported from China. Below are some of the views from the participants:

*"....I'm not rich but I spend [money] on natural things not made in China, and I'm offended by that, there's a lot of things on the market that has no identity..."*

With regards to the Kente cloth: *"The Chinese have made imitations, not the strips or woven, but the cotton, with lots of designs..."*

*"Right now they'll [craft traders] say "come into my shop, come into my shop!", and everybody has the same thing"*

*"Because everybody likes African things, and I don't like that made-in-China stuff...!"*

*"We went all the way over there for a mug that said –made in China- ?"*

*"I've been coming to Africa since December[of 2010] and it's interesting to see the decline in the quality of some things. You find that some of the fabric isn't as nice as it was years ago. There is a limited amount of Dutch wax fabric available, we have stuff that that I know that if we wash is not gonna last. We see things that we see in the Caribbean and they went to Dubai and bought and*

*we've been to Dubai and we've seen them in the airport, in Dubai and, as Frances was saying, you become a little offended. I didn't come all the way to Ghana, Accra to buy cheap stuff, I could get it on 125<sup>th</sup> street which is a little market in New York. So having something authentic or nice is what I'd want..."*  
*"But what we see is not good quality!"*

Tourists suggested the re-introduction of authentic traditional figurines such as the *Akua'ba* doll, a wooden fertility doll. The doll is used mainly for ritualistic purposes, but is now mass produced for sale. The mass produced dolls are available in different colours, slightly altered shapes and are sometimes clothed. The original *Akua'ba* doll is a rare item in many craft markets today, mainly due to product diversification and its primary ritualistic function. So the touristic desire for crafts and the craftsman desire to provide crafts to tourist satisfaction mean that the 'authenticity' of the crafts is also debatable (Cohen, 1988). The monotony in the range of handicraft items sold was also an area of concern. Tourists suggested that traders would make their range of craft items much more interesting by incorporating souvenir-style items such as caps, cups, badges, key rings and T-shirts. This interestingly contradicts their need for authenticity and tradition. On the one hand, tourists desire to see more traditional items being sold, but on the other they also want to see items that they are accustomed to back in the USA.

On further querying respondents as to why they thought there was continued decline in the quality of locally made Ghanaian goods, they responded:

*"Money and accessibility"*

*"Because they [traders] can show that stuff and people will buy it"*

*"Yes, some people buy it"*

This pressure from Diasporas, traders believed, was undermining their business and causing them to 'consider' changing their product or procuring more authentic (and ultimately more expensive) items to maintain their customer base (discussed in more detail in Chapter six).



### **5.6.2 Tourists' Sense of Cultural Pride and Identity**

This was the fourth most mentioned category, together with gift giving and talkativeness. Cultural pride and identity were felt to be an important factor in maintaining social and commercial relations with the Diaspora. African American tourists are considered 'good' and 'friendly' people who have a desire to integrate into the traditional African society and consider Africa their home and adopt traditional identities in the form of local names. Almost all traders interviewed mentioned the same thing, with the exception of a few who had had negative experiences with them.

However the views of the tourists themselves show that the situation is rather more complex. Observations and interviews with tourists suggest that traders are right to some extent, as tourists do have a partial desire to integrate and often show this in numerous ways, including the adoption and purchasing of traditional attire. On the other hand some tourists accept certain socio-cultural norms and reject others. For example some tourists will adopt things like attire, names and some local foods but will shun others like the way local food is prepared, the pouring of libation, live animal offerings to the Gods or intrusive initiation ceremonies. Some traders did pick up on this inconsistency and mentioned that their observations of the tourist's degree of dedication to Africanism are often selective, yet executed with enthusiasm. According to a bead seller, these tourists have a level of pride when amongst relatives of their ancestors and are friendly to other black people, especially during purchases (Interview, Mr. Asamoah, craft seller at Arts Centre, February 11<sup>th</sup> 2012).

This attachment to the African continent is also an emotional trigger when it comes to handicraft purchases in the view that there is a sense of obligation to spend in the country. An African American tourist at the Arts Centre noted that his ancestral link was one of the reasons that encouraged him to help vulnerable traders in the community by purchasing their products (Interview with African American tourist, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2012). Similar beliefs about the influences of African heritage on philanthropic tendencies was expressed in discussion group discussions on motivation and homeland investment. When asked what motivated them to invest in their homelands, nearly all of the

participants expressed that their African roots and the accompanying sense of obligations were the main factor.

### **5.6.3 Talkativeness and Friendliness**

These social characteristics were considered very important to traders when encountering visitors. They were also frequently mentioned and used as defining characteristics when used comparatively against other tourists (as discussed in Chapter six). Traders valued the verbal interaction that took place during the purchase of goods and even gift giving. Conversations usually involved talking about visitor origins, the country and other social-cultural issues of the day. Although it was not the most mentioned in this instance, it shows that the handicraft traders place such social interactions in high regard as a trait during their encounters with their customers and that customer personality warrants enough attention to be singled out as a defining characteristic. This counteracts the numerous instances of negative host-guest interactions (see Skinner, 1982, Ebron, 1999; Timothy and Coles, 2004; Mwakikagile 2007).

### **5.6.4 Anti-Social Behaviour**

In Ghana, adhering to local norms and customs is considered vital for a successful society. These expectations are not just for the local population but are also expected of all visitors, and are greatly frowned upon when ignored. Though not represented in the table, anti-social behaviour was particularly important because informal discussions with traders in the Arts Centre found that this factor, in addition to being a nuisance to sellers, has on occasion impacted on their pricing strategies. Mr. Gyamfi, a craft seller at the Arts Centre mentioned that he had encountered African American tourists who seemed aloof and appeared to *look down* on locals and would not respond to their greetings. Another trader from the Arts Centre, Ms. Akua Pokua experienced what she considered disrespectful behaviour from the younger African American tourists who had

visited her stall. According to her and a small number of other traders, the tourists they had observed did not adhere to key customs such as greeting etiquette (using the right hand to point with, shake hands with and to eat with) and appropriate dress codes;

*“The young do not respect people, especially the women; students use their left hand to talk to direct things which is alien to us. The older ones are okay”*  
*“Some are nice to us and some are very rude to us”*

(Mr. Olab, crafts seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

In terms of the effects on pricing strategies a group of traders revealed that they often hiked up the prices of their handicrafts for tourists (not just African Americans) who were rude or disrespectful. Traders seemed willing to sabotage their sales (which were at times minimal) for the sake of teaching disrespectful tourists a lesson. According to traders, European tourists (who are often not familiar with the local pricing strategies) were often oblivious or ignorant of these price spikes and as such could be relied upon as a back-up plan for low sales.

## **5.7 Summary**

Overall, traders' views about African American tourists, although mixed, are mostly positive. Most responses showed that traders possess a fondness for African Americans as individuals and as tourists. Traders have relied on their ancestral and genealogical connections with these tourists to serve to initiate purchases and as a precursor to gift-giving. Traders value their shared heritage with Diaspora visitors and are focused on the benefits gained from these tourists and how important they are to their livelihoods as a form of social capital. It is not just financial gain, but social institutions, which are key contributors in maintaining one's livelihood (Ellis, 1998). Although these responses were based on 'general' impressions, their implications have become more malignant, as these characteristics also feed into the concept of tourists as customers, as shall be shown in the next section. But African American tourists are not all the same. Years of experience working with them as well as the time spent interviewing them has shown

that there are two kinds of tourists – those who immerse themselves completely in the African experience and adorn themselves to reflect this. This group do not mind the local or basic way of living , though they will promote a better way of life when necessary. They also tend to become residents. The other type of tourist is more particular about all aspects of indigenous local life and tend to have issues when the local norms or traditions does not tally with the ways of the West or the USA.

## **Chapter 6. Trader Incomes and Expenditure Patterns**

### **6.1. Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the influences of tourists and their expenditure on trader incomes and expenditure patterns. The chapter presents the results of the research on the various ways in which the tourists influence the traders' activities and livelihoods. This includes issues related to the impacts that tourists have on their tourism product, traders' views on African American tourists specifically as customers, tourist purchasing patterns, trader income levels and the influence of seasonality on their income and trader expenditure networks.

A key question asked during interviews and informal discussions with traders, was, "What do you think of African American tourists as customers, and what have your experiences been?" African American tourists as customers were discussed to some extent in Chapter five when traders were given the opportunity to give their general views on them. As, many of those responses were centred on purchasing habits, it became important to gather more information in this area. So, in this case traders were asked specifically about these tourists as customers in order to gain more in-depth knowledge of their purchasing behaviour. Responses in this chapter are more detailed and uncover areas not previously mentioned. In this case two main themes emerged; one, that they are *not* the most frequent 'buyers' of handicrafts but traders are still extremely dependant on them for the bulk of their sales and two, that tourists have recently altered their buying strategy which is hindering purchases.

### **6.2 African American Tourists v. Other 'Foreign' Tourists: Comparing Customers and Impact on Sales**

Building upon the basic views of African American tourists, this chapter looks at how traders compared them to other buyers. Some of the reasons given in this chapter also

feature in traders' general views about tourists in the previous chapter, but in this case, responses are used comparatively. According to traders interviewed at the Arts Centre, African American tourists are generally considered *better business people* than Europeans and other Diaspora customers and are therefore *preferred* to other 'foreign' (European) tourists (Interview, Hajia Siriku and other Art Centre traders, February 16 2012).

As already established in Chapter 5, the particular emotional attachment of African Americans tourists to some of the craft products was what fueled them to make purchases. This unsurprisingly was one of the positive comparisons Arts Centre traders tend to make about these tourists when compared to others. Traders saw them as more emotionally attached to the products purchased than other tourists (including Africans) and thus had a higher proclivity for purchasing locally made handicrafts (Interviews, Mike Adjei, Daniel Gyamfi and Paa Willie, craft sellers at Arts Centre, March 2012). In the Cape Coast and Elmina Castle samples (see Table 6.1), traders' also preferred African American tourists as customers and for similar reasons. In that sample the most mentioned reason was that tourists were highly curious and very talkative when it came to the craft product, its traditional history, production process and other background details. But with curiosity also came criticism, a characteristic which some traders found lacking in foreign tourists. In spite of this, the intense dialogue that occurred between trader and tourist seemed to please many traders that were interviewed. Other reasons included their friendliness during the buying process, their conversation and generosity in giving gifts and tips. This shows that, although traders rely significantly on African American expenditure, they also value their non-financial contributions as clients, their role as buyers and the experience of interacting with them during the buying process. Another important thing to note is that 29 respondents that preferred non-African American tourists stated that their main reason lay in the fact that other foreign tourists made 'more purchases' and 'rarely left the sales area without buying something':

*"They should come and buy more as I benefit only a little from them"*

(Interview, O. Opoku; seller at Arts Centre, February 2012)

*“They don’t buy the products as much and don’t come around often”*

(Interview, P. Willie; seller at Arts Centre, March, 2012)

*“They buy **so little** and when they do they complain about quality”*

(Interview, M. Adjei; seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“We **really need them** to buy more, others buy, but when they do, they do it in bulk, because they need it”*

(Interview, A.Appiah; seller at Arts Centre, March, 2012)

So in terms of ‘the amount’ of purchases made, the responses show that other foreign tourists make more of them implying that the African American tourist is not the only significant buyer for the trader. One cannot say, therefore, that they are less profitable than other tourists, as there was only a difference of 7 respondents when it came to opinions on who made more purchases, but they represent a social capital that provides traders with some sort of satisfaction, minus the financial gain. This desire for customers to engage in dialogue was regularly observed during visits to the Arts Centre as well. Sellers would often plead with visitors to simply ‘approach’ ‘look’ or ‘talk’ about their product and insisted that customers had no obligation to buy any of the items. But this was found to be a selling strategy to get the buyer into the selling arena in the hopes that they would be attracted enough to purchase the items shown. The respondents explained that obviously there was a stronger likelihood that tourists would purchase or could be convinced to purchase items if they showed up. When respondents were asked if this was always the case, they answered no and explained that tourists could not be forced to make purchases, but it was still financially sensible to keep them at their shops for as long as possible to increase the chances of items being purchased. Although certain money-saving strategies had been adopted (to be discussed further in Chapter 6) traders were convinced that they could and did find ways around this. It is important to point out that traders were aware of the fact that customer infrequency was partly due to the nature of their visits.

African American tourists are still considered a ‘significant source of income’, and thus a prioritized means of gaining financial capital for handicraft traders. Below are some of the trader responses from the Arts Centre regarding the particular significance that African American tourists have for them. These also relate to some of the cultural affinity issues discussed above:

*“All my sales are mostly determined by the Afro American tourist. As you see today they are not here, so we are sitting down doing nothing and selling nothing. If they come, the place will become active again. Some white people come and buy our things **but they do not buy with the same passion as the Afro Americans**...”*

(Interview, M. Adjei; seller at Arts Centre, February 2012)

*“Our business **cannot survive without them** {African Americans} as they buy all things, so when they are not here we find it difficult to run our business”*

(Interview, C. Osei-Yaw, crafts seller at Arts Centre, February-March 2012)

*“When they come, they buy a lot which helps us”*

(Interview, M. Agyemang, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“They can buy as many as 100 Kente shirts, one Mr. Bandele from New York comes every year and buys a lot of items including three piece Agadze Kente shirts...I think he goes to sell them in New York”*

(Interview, K. Gyasi, seller at Arts Centre, February 2012)

As expressed by the respondents, African Americans are regarded as a market that can be trusted and relied upon to purchase their items due to the historical and emotional attachment that they have to the country and its products. But even more significant is the volumes of purchases when they *are* made. Phrases such as ‘a lot’, ‘buy all things’ ‘as many as 100’ (as mentioned above) show that African American tourists (unlike other tourists) are known for the ‘sizeable’ purchases that they make. Although many traders have expressed concern over customer numbers and buyers, it is evident that these bulk purchases are sporadic and seasonal and though they may be in large



Table 6.1 Trader perceptions of African American tourists versus other tourists

Responses			
Prefer AA (74)		Prefer other foreign (31)	
Reasons given	Number	Reasons given	Number
More talkative about product	27	Purchase more than other tourists	29
Emotionally attached; purchase more than other tourists	22	Less critical of products sold	2
More patient and friendly	16		
More generous ; gifts/tips	7		
Haggle more than others	2		
Other responses			
Response		Number	
No difference between the two		10	
No response		9	

quantities it was clear that they could not make up for the intermittent periods of limited activity. Nonetheless this point on large purchases is in tension with the generally expressed view that African American tourists are not the singly most profitable group of tourists for the traders. However without precise sales figures and accounts it is impossible to be certain which is right. It is possible that the tourists are actually more profitable for certain traders with certain types of goods. However, there is some concern and frustration over recent trends in commerce.

### 6.3 Tourist Customer Numbers vs. Purchasing Frequencies

Handicraft traders were first asked ‘what percentage’ of their customer base was African American. This particular question excluded customers that actually made any purchases. Traders were then asked how many of these customers actually purchased from them on a weekly basis. These two questions were asked in order to mitigate any

issues that were likely to arise from traders being unable to provide specific amounts. This was found to be an effective strategy as those who could not provide specific numbers such as 35, 50 or 83 were able to provide data estimates in terms of weekly customer numbers and percentages.

Some interviewees who could not provide a percentage used popular *Akan* Ghanaian phrasing such as '*kakra*', '*kitwaa bi*', meaning a little or small amount and '*omu dorsoo*' or '*bebiree*' meaning "*they are a lot*" or a "*large amount*" to describe numbers. Although such responses were vague, the combination of percentage queries and specific numbers provided a general picture of tourist numbers. Responses in this case were based on whether customers were of African American origin or not. In other words, the 'other' category of non African Americans would represent either Caucasian visitors, domestic visitors or other Diaspora visitors.

Results showed that only a slight majority of the sample (55 out of 105) considered African American tourists a significant portion (at least 60%) of their clientele or customer base, while 36 of these said that these tourists formed 80% or more of their customers (Table 6.3). Traders in the Accra Crafts Centre showed similar trends. An interview with Ms. Hajia showed that African American tourists made up the majority (70%) of her customer base while Mr. K. Kunadu, also a crafts seller at the centre, said that they made up 60% of his visitors. Another significant amount of respondents (50) said that these tourists formed fewer than 60% of their visiting customers, with 37 of these saying that they formed 50% or fewer of their clientele (Table 6.3).

So this implies that for 48% of respondents, African Americans form at most 59% while other foreign tourists make up the remaining 41% of their usual visitors, while for the other 52%, African Americans make up at least 60% and other tourists form at most 40%. These results are still significant and support trader dissatisfaction with the frequency of African American visits. In terms of actual sales made, the vast majority of traders (101 out of 113 or 89%) said they were making sales to fewer than 16 African American customers per week - thus about two per day (Table 6.4). As shown in Table

Table 6.2 Percentage groupings of buyers that are African American

Groupings (%)	Number of sellers	%
60% or more	55	52
Below 60%	50	48
Total	105*	100

\*18 respondents gave non-quantitative responses while one gave no response at all and are excluded from the table. Of the 18 traders who gave non quantitative responses, roughly half said African American customers were not very significant for their sales but the rest felt they made up ‘many’ or ‘most’ of their customers.

Table 6.3 Disaggregation of handicraft buyers who are African American

Groupings (%)	Number of craft traders	%
90-100	19	18
80-89	17	16
70-79	11	10
60-69	8	8
50-59	13	12
40-49	6	6
30-39	8	8
20-29	10	10
10-19	5	5
Less than 10	8	8
Total	105	101*

The table above represents a more detailed disaggregation of the share of their customers who, from the traders’ viewpoint, are African American.

\* Table: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding of percentages

6.4, the most usual trader experience, accounting for 59% of the sample, was to sell to 5 or fewer African American customers per week, so it would be common to sell to only one on average per day, and very many would make no African American related sales on some days. Some traders had said that African American tourists could spend around GHC100 (Ghanaian Cedis) (equivalent to around £33)<sup>16</sup> worth of goods in a single

<sup>16</sup>The exchange rate between the GHC and the GBP varied considerably between 2009 and 2013 when fieldwork data were collected. Variations in exchange rates for any data that follow are indicated in

Table 6.4 Specific number of buyers that are African American

Number of African American tourists that purchase items from traders (per week)	Number of traders	% of sample
≥16	12	11
11-15	10	9
6-10	22	19
1-5	67	59
0	2	2
Total	113*	100

\*11 respondents gave non quantitative responses and are excluded from the table

transaction every couple of days. But as this was not the case for the entire sample, generalizations cannot be made. But were this the case for all the respondents then one could estimate that even though trader purchases were considered inadequate, the ‘bulk’ of purchases made even by one customer would be significant to traders. This is because this would amount to traders receiving on average at least GHC30 per day per transaction. This conclusion however would contradict the complaints of low sales by the traders. But the small number of traders who asserted this was not enough to validate such a conclusion. Nonetheless the implications that this could be possible for the remaining sample are still important to the study. But the sales business is obviously very different from an office or factory job where fixed income amounts are guaranteed monthly.

When relating these statistics to the share of customers, it was found that out of the 55 respondents who had 60% or more of African American tourist customers, only 5 of them said that they received 20 or more purchases per week from this group (about 3 a day) while the remaining 49 received fewer than this amount. Only two of those who said that these tourists formed 80% or more of their visitors had more than 20 purchases per week. This shows that in the absence of any supporting jobs and ‘bulk’ purchases,

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footnotes or under any relevant tables. From Feb-May 2012, when trader interviews for this group were conducted, the rate fluctuated somewhat between GHC3.01 and GHC2.65. So for most of this chapter, unless indicated otherwise, an average rate of GHC2.83 is used.

those that rely solely on African American tourist expenditure are extremely vulnerable because of its uncertainty. This also means that the other percentage of visitors that are not African American are likely making more purchases, further supporting the assertion made earlier that foreigners buy more.

#### **6.4 Alteration in Tourist Buying Strategy**

According to many of the traders in the Arts Centre, the purchasing power and the buying strategy of African American tourists has changed significantly in the last ten years. This change has mostly been negative and has been the main cause of low or inadequate sales. Although various reasons were given, the two main answers that stood out were security issues in the U.S and the tourists' increasing familiarity and awareness of local trading nuances. For instance, a trader complained that African American tourists, who had previously been considered 'good' trading partners, were no longer regarded as such as they were now considered '*commercially awake*':

*"Their eyes are now wide open"*

(Interview, Mr. Agyemang, seller at Arts Centre trader, February 2012).

*"They never asked for reduction in prices, but now they do not see it that way"*

(Interview, Mr. K. Kunadu, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012).

During trade with tourists, sellers noticed that they were increasingly adopting the habit of asking for reductions in prices, a practice that had been rare a couple of years ago. During observations, it was observed that African Americans customers would enquire about a product, then upon hearing the initial price would begin negotiations and then halt negotiations claiming that they would think about the purchase and then return. This 'price skimming' technique of creating the illusion of disinterest in the hope that the seller will give in so as to avoid losing a customer, is widely used by locals and is often effective; it is of course a worldwide practice. Several traders corroborated this observation, adding that on some occasions customers would not return, signaling that

the negotiated price was out of their spending range;

*“Some of them bargain with us and then buy, but some don’t. They just walk in the shop and then walk out”*

(Interview, S. Joe, seller at Arts Centre)

*“Nowadays, when they look at my shop, they just look for some seconds, ask for the price and then say they will ‘go and come’, but we all know that they won’t return. These days, they have become **chisel**<sup>17</sup>”*

(Interview, Mr. Evans, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“These people are fast these days you know! They are smart like us now, they go all over, visiting other shops, so when you tell them a price most of them think it’s expensive, and so they leave and don’t come back”*

(Interview, K. Kwabena, seller at Arts Centre, April 2012)

This was, in their experience, a regular occurrence in the Arts Centre, as about two fifths of African American tourists observed would continually haggle for items and end up not purchasing any handicraft items at all;

*“As customers they have also changed, when they come they ask for too much reduction...”*

(Interview, A. Boateng, seller at Arts Centre, February 2012).

*“Some bargain with us and say they are coming and never come back”*

(Interview, OLAB, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“Some ask for the product and say they will come back and never come back, others too, when you tell them the price, they don’t think and they just give you the money”*

(Interview, Ibrahim, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“At first, they were good, but now their eyes have opened. In the sense that when they are at home in America and they go to buy in shops, they do not ask for reduction, but now they have assumed Ghanaian attitude of asking for reduction of prices ALL the time!”*

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<sup>17</sup> *Chisel* is a local slang meaning miser or frugal.

(Interview, O. Adutwum, seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

When asked what they felt made trading in Ghana and trading in the US different, another trader stated that;

*“We don’t have fixed price for anything, so they bargain when they come. Some also ask and often go and come back no more, since the market is very big”*

(Interview, Kamal, seller at Arts Centre, April 2012).

Interviews with tourists found that this buying strategy extends into general goods and services as well. Transportation and accommodation costs are just some of the service areas that are increasingly being questioned. This practice, however, rarely applies to first-time visitors to the country who are yet to familiarize themselves with the business strategies. According to Mr. C. Gordon, an African American tourist turned resident, his two years of experience of the outlandish transportation prices given by taxi drivers has on many occasions forced him to seek cheaper alternatives (mini vans/tro-tro or *Troskis*<sup>18</sup>) to get to his destination;

*“I once had an experience with a taxi driver. When I realized that he was trying to charge me a high price, I told him - ‘listen, I can get on a Tro-Tro for GHC1, so I know my way around’ ....they tend to treat you like a tourist”*

(Interview, Mr. C. Gordon, AAAG, May 2012)

Most of the African American tourists interviewed explained that they believed that the traders were asking for unreasonable prices for the products and they also believed that they could get a better bargain elsewhere. During a brief interview with several of the African American tourists at the Arts Centre in early 2012, one of the questions asked was what advice they had for handicraft traders based on their experiences. Some of the replies were; *‘to lower prices!’*, *‘tell them to their items are too costly’*, *‘it’s just too*

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<sup>18</sup> Troski is a word used by many Ghanaians to represent commercial mini vans. It is an amalgam of a Tro-tro (a local name for a minivan) and a taxi

*much*'. When asked to explain further, one tourist said that most of the handicraft traders that she had encountered in the Accra market, in Aburi and other handicraft centres had very high prices. Her experiences showed that independent craft sellers (hawkers and peddlers) were slightly more affordable than the larger more recognized craft centres, and that the sellers in the Arts Centre were taking advantage of their status as the craft capital of the city. According to Mr. K. Kunadu and several other traders, the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the USA also affected the flow of African American tourists to Ghana and consequently to the Art Centre. This was an issue that traders felt strongly about and had observed for over 10 years:

*"At first African Americans were 'good', now they are not. Since Osama Bin Laden blasted America, they have changed..."*

(Interview, K. Kunadu, crafts seller at Arts Centre, February 2012)

*"Since 2001 to now, tourism has come down and they [African Americans] don't come to purchase our goods as they used to at first"*

(Interview, OLAB, March 2012)

Another response worthy of note also involved an event in the US, which was seen as a cause of tourists' altered buying strategies. A trader explained that at present, African American tourists are not buying as much as they normally would and that their purchasing power (for some reason that she could not explain) had diminished since President Barack Obama came into power in 2009<sup>19</sup> (Interview with Regina Sarpomaa 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012). This perception is more accurately a direct effect of the 2008 global financial crises that preceded Obama's presidency and its resultant mass unemployment and huge housing crises in the USA.

At the site studied in Accra, another issue raised about the level of patronage of handicraft products was the presence of other handicraft centres all across the capital city and close to the Arts Centre. These are also popular amongst locals and tourists but

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<sup>19</sup> After President Obama took office in 2009, Ghanaians believed that the financial capabilities of African Americans would greatly increase following the election of the first Black president of the United States



are fewer in number. These centres are usually independent private businesses that are spread out at vantage points such as along road sides and motorways for easy identification and access. They usually sell masks, fabrics and atypical craft items such as handmade plant pots, garden figurines, garden sculptures, cane furniture and others. These establishments, according to Mr. Kamal, had redirected some of the attention and sales away from the Arts Centre, which was at one time the only significant source of handicrafts in the city. Other traders blamed low sales on the hawkers who were now so often found at the entrance to the Arts Centre;

*“Business nowadays is very low due to the roadside people who make some of the product”*

(Interview, J. Abubakari, crafts seller at Arts Centre, February 2012)

*“The business is very low due to how business is all over the city, at first this place was the only place they came to buy”*

(Interview, A. Brahima, craft seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

*“The market has gone down compared to years ago, due to people establishing the same business centre, at first it was the Arts Centre alone”*

(Interview, Kamal, April 2012)

These hawkers who also sell jewellery beads (usually imported from China) to attract African American tourists, are usually the first to come into contact with them, undercutting Arts Centre prices. As these hawkers have no permanent sales location, their mobility distresses traders at the centre, who claim that they meander to and from the Arts Centre, capitalizing on their customer base. It is not illegal (but shunned upon) for itinerant hawkers to position themselves at certain<sup>20</sup> locations. However, the existing monitoring and enforcement systems are insufficient to mitigate this, and as a result, Arts Centre traders are left to compete with the large number of traders within the centre as well as those at the entrance.

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<sup>20</sup> It is illegal at other locations (such as on pavements of main roads, city centres and on pavements near official residences)

Table 6.5 Effect of the Emancipation period on trader businesses

Response	Number of handicraft traders	Percentage of handicraft traders (%)
Positive change	49	40
No change (existing business)	37	30
No knowledge of festivals/did not attend	12	10
Negative change	11	9
No change (new business)	9	7
Negative and positive change	6	5
Total	124	101

### 6.5 The Impact of PANAFEST and Emancipation and Seasonality on Trader Income levels

With the knowledge that traders were dissatisfied with the frequency of African American purchases, the study sought to analyze what underpinned these issues. Traders in Elmina and Cape Coast were asked several questions to elicit details about how the festival period and seasonality affected tourist numbers and ultimately their businesses. Table 6.5 shows that the Emancipation and PANAFEST periods are financially rewarding to only 40% of traders, but financially non-rewarding to just as many (39%). For the 40% of handicraft traders, the onset of the Emancipation celebrations brought about a ‘positive’ change in their businesses in the form of ‘increased’ sales and increased opportunities;

*“Because of this period, I have increased the price of the items, and so get money.”*

(Interview, male crafts seller at Elmina; table top, shells and beads<sup>21</sup>)

*“PANFEST sometimes can change your business and lifestyle because if you have more things, they (African Americans) will buy.”*

(Interview, male crafts sellers at Cape Coast, table top seller, June 2010)

*“Because at the PANAFEST, they (African American tourists) buy more than in*

<sup>21</sup> Section refers to the sex, age, location, type of trader and type of items sold

*the shop”*

(Interview, Female fabric seller at Cape Coast, May 2010)

Respondents who did not find the period financially rewarding (39%) included those who had observed a decrease in sales (9%) and those who had existing businesses that had not seen any change at all (30%). In other words, for the 30%, business had remained relatively unchanged when compared to the months prior to and following past festival periods, including Christmas and Easter holidays. These traders blamed the disorganization of the heritage festivals for the dwindling tourist numbers and the consequent reduction in craft sales;

*“When PANAFEST was initially introduced, business was booming because more of the African Americans come around but now business is trying to be like how it was before the emancipation or the PANAFEST”*

(Interview, Female crafts seller at Elmina, Table top, shells and sculptures, March 2010)

*“PANAFEST today is different from PANAFEST yesterday. When PANAFEST was initially started the number of African Americans that come is very large but now the African Americans who come are very few therefore there have been a decrease in the growth of the business”*

(Interview, Male crafts seller at Elmina, kiosk, sculptures, March 2010)

The issue of low tourist patronage of trade is not exclusive to hawkers along the castle routes but also applies to larger scale traders. During the PANAFEST celebrations 2009, traders who had exhibited at the ‘Expo Bazaar’ that was held in Cape Coast at Victoria Park, complained of low sales and patronage of their goods. Traders who were interviewed also blamed the poor organization of the festival and the inability to direct tourists to their location to buy goods as the main cause. Those who saw a decrease in sales mentioned that the irregular flow of visitors meant that they could not afford to miss out on potential customers by conducting business part time and as a result were stationary in their stalls from as early as 7am to 5pm, seven days a week. This is the case in most craft markets with the exception of specific markets that only function on

specific days. Another group of respondents (7%) also saw no change, but this number consisted of those who had recently set up their business (within the last 3 months) and therefore (in their view) had not been in business long enough to provide comprehensive comparisons. Ten percent of respondents stated that they did not attend or sell during the festival period for three main reasons: limited or no knowledge of Emancipation festival celebrations; the financial restraints of altering goods to suit festival needs; and high gate/entrance fees at certain events. This is because the payment of such high entry fees would not guarantee any sales and so traders preferred not to take the risk. Five percent of the sample had seen equal amounts of positive and negative changes in their business during this period. Positive changes involved seeing an increased number of African American tourists visit their business, while the negative saw them not make any purchases in spite of these visits. It was the non-African American tourists that would occasionally make some purchases (as observed in Chapter 6). There was no specific pattern in terms of the age of those respondents who did not attend the festivals or who were not interested. The only correlation was that all the respondents were male, but this more likely because of the number of males in the sample.

So although it has been proven (through official tourist arrival statistics and trader interviews) that the festival periods see an increase in tourist numbers (both African American and non-African American), purchases by African American tourists in particular are still considered inadequate during this period. Only a handful of traders are seeing any positive results, but the number who don't see any change or are seeing negative results are significant, and such traders (excluding the itinerant sellers) cannot afford to move and so remain at their selling area all year round to take advantage of any intermittent Diaspora and non-Diaspora activity. This is in contrast to handicraft traders in India (from Tibet and India) who (according to McNaughton) usually conduct business for several months a year for specific periods of intense tourist activity and leave to continue trading in an alternative hotspot (McNaughton, 2006). Holsey (2004) noted that many Ghanaians did not see the benefit of Emancipation –themed ceremonies unless it was having a direct positive impact on their livelihoods (Holsey, 2004). Although traders in this study have on occasion expressed concern over the benefits of

Table 6.6 The Impacts of African American tourists on handicraft trader product change

Product change	Cape Coast respondents		Elmina respondents		Overall number	
	number	%	number	%	number	%
Yes*	42	69	7	11	50	40
No	19	31	56	89	74	60
Total	61	100	63	100	124	100

\*includes respondents who said ‘sometimes’ and ‘some items’.

these festivals, the results indicate that these festivals are not having *as much* impact as they should or possibly could have on local livelihoods.

## 6.6 Impact of Tourists on Product Change

In order to further assess the level of influence of tourists on handicraft businesses, traders in Elmina and Cape Coast were asked if they had ever changed their tourism products to suit the needs of their African American customers. Table 6.6 tabulates the responses given, while Table 6.7, details the reasons behind the given responses. The majority (60%) answered ‘no’ and claimed that they did not see the need to change their products but the remainder (40%) had in some way tailored their product to suit the needs of the tourist. Of the 74 respondents who said ‘no’, 60 explained that they had made the ‘strategic’ decision *not* to alter their products but to maintain their current range of items because specific items were still being bought by tourists. In essence, they interpreted uninterrupted purchases as customer contentment. Financial constraints such as low profit margins prevented some traders (5) from restocking their items or procuring more costly ones (a factor often mentioned by handicraft traders in general). For example, 6-12 yards of authentic hand-woven Kente fabric can cost around £300 to acquire and would cost almost double for the customer to purchase. Traders as a result often have no choice but to sell more affordable and less authentic products at an attractive price to make some profit. If traders cannot make a reasonable profit from the sale of their handiwork, then they will not see the benefit in

putting any effort into its procurement, production or sale (Richards G., 2002). Other responses included: a creative and executive decision to maintain products sold even in the midst of low sales because they still had 'faith' in their product; and a desire to assess and analyze the market prior to product alteration and changing a product based on seasonal (not tourist) demands. Only three respondents could not give specific reasons as to why they did not change their products. It was rare to find sellers who were willing to endure low sales based on a 'belief' in the product being sold. But further querying found that these sellers were actually focused on differentiating themselves from other traders by selling 'unique' items and believed that mimicking other traders would only increase competition in an already saturated market and make it more difficult for them to make any significant sales. All of the sellers who admitted to changing, altering or renewing their product in some way mentioned that their main objective was obviously to attract the customer. The methods used in attracting tourists took various forms and were interpreted by respondents in several ways. The methods included attracting tourists by avoiding monotony in product display. In this way, the added variety would increase their chances of making a sale. Also making every effort to cater to individual tastes was also considered important as African Americans (like other tourists) are known by traders to have particular 'tastes' in craft products. These may include the type of colours, styles and designs that they have been known to patronize over the years from purchases made (Interview, Mr. K. Gyasi, crafts seller at Arts Centre, March 2012). According to one trader, his initial strategy had been to sell sculptures with beads and fabrics, but a steady decline in the sale of these sculptures caused him to reconsider and cease selling sculptures altogether and start selling beads (Interview, male crafts seller at Elmina, 2010). Another respondent explained that he gradually introduced jewellery beads into his product in response to a request from tourists, but also from his own observations of other customers gravitating towards beads (Interview, male crafts seller at Cape Coast March 2010).

Though not included in this table, traders in the Arts Centre are also greatly influenced by tourist demand. Though the range of most of the products sold there have remained the same over the years (with a few additions here and there) research at the centre

Table 6.7 Reasons for product change

Responses			
Yes (50)		No (74)	
Reasons given	Number	Reasons given	Number
Attract tourists*	47	AA still buying current items**	60
N/A***	2	Financial constraints	5
Cash in on holidays	1	Faith in product****	4
		No reason given	3
		New business*****	2

\*Attracts tourists: avoiding monotony in display, catering to individual tastes

\*\*AA still buying current items: current items still being purchased by African American tourists

\*\*\*N/A: responses given that were not related to influences on tourist purchases

\*\*\*\*Faith in product: trader still believes in product uniqueness in spite of slow sales

\*\*\*\*\*New business: needs to assess the market and the selling potential of their products before any changes are made

showed that traders are incorporating Shea butter, a cosmetic item, into their handicraft products. Though not a craft product itself, the growing popularity of this item amongst African Americans has seen its presence grow considerably in the craft market.

## 6.7 Influence of Trader Selling Techniques on Handicraft Purchases

In addition to direct expenditure, the selling techniques of traders have been found to affect the degree and level of commerce that tourists engage in. It has been stated in this study that the expenditure of African American tourists is a direct form of financial capital to local traders in terms of the money that they spend in exchange for goods, and social capital in the form of relationships and networks that sellers develop from interaction with these tourists. This dependency on financial capital as a source of survival has perpetrated the tourist-trader dilemma of hassle and intrusion. Petty traders, not only in Ghana but globally, sometimes have a less than favourable interaction with tourists and are often considered nuisances to them (Radhakrishnan, 2007). ‘Tourist traders’ in particular are considered ‘very aggressive’ as compared to non-tourist traders (interview with African American tourist, July 2009). Non-tourist traders usually consist

of sellers who cater to the needs of the general Ghanaian public (food sellers, clothes sellers, stationary sellers, and appliance sellers) while tourist-traders are sellers whose main target market is tourists, and for this reason, sell tourist - desired memorabilia such as traditional craft keep-sakes and souvenirs. Tour operators have also commented on the inconveniences that tourist traders have caused their clients on numerous occasions (discussed more in Chapter eight).

### **6.7.1 The Concept of Intrusion and Aggression**

*Often, local traders are sometimes “the only point of contact between the local community and tourists, and are hence crucial to a tourist’s impression of a place, as well as to the expansion of economic opportunities for the poor” (Shah and Gupta, 2000: 28).*

Aggressive sales techniques by local traders are emphasized in Bruner’s (2005) book, *Culture on tour: ethnographies of travel*, in which the author comments on the violent way in which tourists are treated and the government’s efforts in providing some form of security for tourists in the form of guards, and how in her focus group sessions and interviews, protecting tourists from financial harassment by locals was a key topic of interest. The PANAFEST (Pan-African festival) visitor survey of 2007 cited ‘harassment by peddlers’ as one of the complaints of American tourists. The comments section of the survey identified that tourist harassment by sellers was ‘aggressive and persistent’ and that the hassle should be significantly reduced. This issue has resulted in security being dispatched to specific vantage points to aid in abating the issue. This issue with security was evident in trader interviews in which two male handicraft shop traders from Cape Coast complained about security at the area and its impacts on *their* contact with tourists. The traders stated that ‘tourist guards’ prevented tourists from buying from them. According to the respondents;

*“The guards would talk bad about us”*

(Interview with male respondent A).



*"The castle needs police to watch there to prevent thieves so the Black Americans can come and buy"*

(Interview with male respondent B)

Ebron (1999) vividly depicts two instances in which craft sellers near a fort overshadowed the emotional experience for tourists:

*"This bonding experience proved exceptionally potent in creating a deeper connection. Yet the pensive and reflective period was disrupted by the swarm of peddlers that surrounded the group once we were no longer protected by the walls of the fort. The historical return met present time, and we were urged back into our tourist status: "Hello, my brother, hello, my sister, won't you buy this; it is cheap." The parade of entrepreneurs offering the same items was overpowering; some of us were distracted from our former mood and purchased souvenirs." (Ebron, 1999:922)*

*"After the excursion to Goree Island, our tour group continued its introduction to our newly reclaimed African kin: we visited markets and artisan cooperatives; we were entertained at an evening banquet; and many moments were felt deeply even as they were punctuated with commercial engagement. Everywhere we were accosted by the kinship invocations of the ever-present street vendors: "My brother, my sister. . ." (Ebron, 1999:924)*

The reference to *hassle* and *unwanted commercial marketing* is evident in the literal and visual *tone* of Ebron's descriptions. Similar cases were evident in the observations of trader-tourist interaction, covering several weeks in Cape Coast, Elmina and the Accra Arts Centre. These observations suggested that this was on many occasions the most effective method for 'improving' one's chances of sales but not 'guaranteeing' a sale. On five separate occasions, the forcefulness as well as creativity of trader marketing was observed.

#### **6.7.1.1 Elmina Castle; Day 1**

Visitors are approached by sellers as soon as they leave their vehicles. As I headed into the castle, a swarm of hawkers and vendors (comprising of male, itinerant handicraft

bead sellers) approached me and began to market their wares. “Hello my sister...”. They were extremely friendly and one seller was willing to act as an unofficial personal tour guide for the day (at the expense of his business, but possibly in the hopes of encouraging me to donate money). I kindly declined the offer. Another handicraft seller nearby approached me, greeted me and asked my name and interestingly immediately disappeared into a corner and surprisingly reappeared five minutes later with a personalized sea shell with my name felted in and a greeting (see figure 4). He then began to market himself explaining that he sold sea shells and could personalize any shell with any inscription for a price. I once again declined the offer and he conceded and left to attend to some foreign tourists that have just appeared. On several occasions, the tourists that I encountered in the same situation would take a look at the items being marketed and then indicate that they would be back.

#### **6.7.1.2 Elmina Castle; Day 16**

During a ‘mock’<sup>22</sup> purchase of traditional textiles from a seller located within the castle grounds, a group of African American tourists (known initially by their African garment and primarily by their accent) entered the castle grounds in a taxi and began to approach the stall in which I was located. Seven bead sellers scattered across the grounds quickly picked up their pans of wares and surrounded the taxi before it had time to park. As the tourists struggled to emerge from the surrounded taxi, the sellers bombard them with their goods, shouting ‘Obroni, look!’, very cheap, only two Ghana Cedis!’. While some tourists just ignored them others decline with a wave of a hand and proceed away from the stall and towards the castle. However the traders continued to follow the tourists in anticipation that they would succeed in changing her mind. They followed them till they finally disappeared into the castle (Figure 6.1)

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<sup>22</sup> Mock purchase: in this context, a mock purchase refers to the pretend purchasing of an item in which one negotiates prices or expresses false interest in buying an item to gain information, or in some cases to be polite and not to offend a trader who calls you to their stall. In Ghanaian traditional sales culture, it is considered polite to at least *look* at the items of a trader who calls you to them, even if there is no intention to purchase any goods.



Figure 6.1 Traders following tourists that have just alighted from a taxi near the entrance to the Elmina Castle  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (June, 2010)

### 6.7.1.3 Cape Coast Castle; Day 31

During fieldwork on this day I was approached by a teenage boy with a donation form, seeking funds for his local football team. The price of the 'previously' signed donations forms that I was handed ranged from GHC30-70 (£13-32)<sup>23</sup> which was considered a large sum of money in local Ghanaian currency. The donation form had a number of signatures to specific amounts, however their authenticity was in question as signatures could have been forced and it was unlikely that anyone would donate such a hefty amount of money without having any proof of their investment or that the donation would actually go to the football club. This form of approach by young men was not

<sup>23</sup> The exchange rate from February to June of 2010 was GHC2.17 to GBP1

uncommon in Ghana and was often seen in the popular tourist beaches such as Labadi Beach. Locals often ignore such solicitations due to its dubious nature, and consequently those who solicit for donations only target foreigners.

#### **6.7.1.4 Arts Centre; Day 34**

In the Arts Centre the selling strategy was slightly different; as an observer I found that though sellers do not approach visitors initially, they become more aggressive only when one has entered the selling area.. The calling increases intensely as one continues to walk through a numerous rows of stalls, with each seller asking you to take a look at their goods and some even grabbing your arm and urging you to purchase their products. It is noticeable that each stall in the fabric section sells an almost identical range of items.

The issue of aggressive selling is a unique one. There are two important issues to consider however when it comes to this selling strategy: Firstly that though this strategy is in some ways a threat to making sales it may not always undermine trader livelihoods. This is because many traders rely on hassling to survive;

*‘African Americans buy sometimes, but not as much as whites or other Black Africans like Nigerians. The tour people take the tourists away from us the small traders so it is spoiling our market, that’s why we are always chasing them’*

(Interview, beads seller with hand held tray, Elmina, February 2010)

So for the individual trader it is financially beneficial to hassle, as this increases their chance of making a sale. Traders will not jeopardize their sales by using a strategy that has not proven beneficial at least once, so by continuing to aggressively sell their goods, it implies that at some point this method has proven successful. The second issue is whether or not this aggressive selling is actually preventing or encouraging tourists to purchase any items. The previous observations made (as discussed in Chapter 6) suggest otherwise, but differing strategies in the Arts Centre (also discussed in Chapter 6) makes

it much more difficult to determine the decision making process of many tourists. It has been ascertained that tourists hate the hassle by traders, but whether this actually stops them from buying what they had intended can only be hypothesized. Some tourists may be deterred, buy less or even go somewhere else to purchase their items, but as this is a complex and hypothetical issue, the outcome on trader livelihoods in this situation can only be speculated on.

## **6.8 The Disadvantage of location**

In addition to aggressive selling, another factor which makes the craft centre vulnerable and thus affects handicraft purchases in Elmina and Cape Coast in particular is the proximity of craft sellers to the slave castles (Table 7.8). As explained previously Diaspora tourists have explained their discomfort with engaging in commerce at a site that holds such emotional reverence for them (Ebron, 1999). Although the forts are the main reason that they visit the location, it is also the very reason that discourages them from making purchases. Sellers at the Arts Centre have an advantage in this sense because their location holds no particular emotional trauma for the Diaspora. The only instance in which this may be debated is the centre's proximity to the Nkrumah Mausoleum. But no tourists interviewed have complained that this has in anyway discouraged them from making any purchases there.

## **6.9 Income Earnings from Handicraft Sales**

Although traders were asked about their daily or hourly income earnings, many found this question very intrusive although some were forthcoming. In order to find a usable point of reference for assessing income earnings, some respondent data and the 2008 Ghana Statistical Survey were used. According to the survey, the average hourly income of working individuals engaged in 'crafts and related trades' was estimated at GHC0.65

(£0.31)<sup>24</sup> (GLSS 5, 2008). This was more than workers in plant and machinery (GHC 0.60), services and sales (GHC0.53), elementary occupations (GHC0.50) and agriculture and fisheries (GHC0.42), but less than clerks (GHC0.66), technicians and associate professionals (GHC0.82), professionals (GHC1.34) and legislators/managers (GHC1.88). On the assumption that traders worked an average of 8 hours per day, their daily income according to the GLSS data works out at GHC5.20 (or £2.50 at the time), equivalent to about double the national minimum wage for 2008 which was GHC2.25 (£1.08). By February 2014 the national minimum wage was double that at GHC5.25 (£1.31)<sup>25</sup>. Unfortunately the GLSS 6 survey which was launched in October 2012 was not available to the general public when the research for this PhD was being undertaken, so more current statistics of traders in the crafts sector could not be ascertained

From my research, it was found that during peak periods of tourist activity (PANAFEST and Emancipation festivals), that some Arts Centre traders were earning as much as GHC 1500 (£530)<sup>26</sup> a month in craft sales. However this was unusual. More commonly people would earn in the range of GHC 200-500 at those times. Off peak seasons would bring in as little as GHC50 and GHC100 for many traders. These income data support many traders' observations (discussed earlier) that only a few African American tourists visit the location daily in off peak times. Income levels from selected traders from the Arts Centre, Cape Coast, Koforidua and Odumasi-Krobo are tabulated for comparison in Table 7.7. Traders were unable to specify the exact amount received for bead and non-bead purchases, however, they did explain that bead purchases (in the absence of Kente Fabrics) were the fastest sellers and in some cases could account for half of their craft sales. To explore these income earnings further, Table 6.8 shows African American tourist expenditure on crafts as given by the tourists themselves. As shown in the table, tourist expenditure on crafts was as high as \$6,800 (£4080)<sup>27</sup> taking up 80% of one's total shopping budget. Using only the valid cases (those with data in all cases) that have

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<sup>24</sup> The exchange rate in September 2008 was GHC2.08 to GBP1

<sup>25</sup> The exchange rate in February 2014 was GHC4 to GBP1

<sup>26</sup> The exchange rate in February 2012 was GHC2.83 to GBP1

<sup>27</sup> Tourists were interviewed over several years and, as discussed already, exchange rates varied considerably. In this instance the rate used is USD1 = GBP0.6 which was current at the time of writing in February 2014.

a figure for total shopping money brought to spend and the amount spent on crafts, the average expenditure on crafts for the tourist was 55% of their shopping budget;

$$\text{Average \% of shopping expenditure on crafts} = 22,300 / 40320 = 55\%$$

But it is important to clarify that this is only a *percentage* of their shopping expenditure; the bulk of their money would be spent on the tour package, accommodation, transport, flights, food and other areas that tend to ‘leak’ overseas (except for some of the food and transport which would be local). So a very significant proportion of African American tourist shopping money in Ghana goes on crafts.

### **6.9.1 The Practice of Gift-Giving**

Another form of ‘income’ for traders comes in the form of gift-giving. Gifts are given during purchases and acts as an additional form of income for traders. The generosity of African American tourists in the form of gift giving featured prominently in trader interviews, both in the Arts Centre and in Elmina and Cape Coast. This practice was not limited to the Diaspora tourists, but was also favoured by European tourists; however traders mentioned that African American seemed to do this more than other tourists and the gifts acted as ‘tips’ to the income gained from direct sales. Gifts, which often include clothes and shoes, would occur even after purchases were made (Interview, Mr. K. Gyasi, 13 March 2012).

It was unclear whether decisions to give gifts to traders were preconceived or done at the spur of the moment. However informal discussion with other traders highlighted the fact that this practice would usually take place after purchases had been made, which would most likely imply that these decisions were made on the spur of the moment. Gift giving was found to have a somewhat addictive effect on the livelihoods of traders. The once common practice, which has gone on for years and is a familiar exchange amongst African American tourists and traders, has also caused a level of dependency amongst handicraft traders;

Table 6.8 African American tourist expenditure on crafts

Amount brought for shopping (\$)	Amount spent on crafts (\$)	% of shopping budget
10,000	No data	No data
10,000	No data	No data
8500	6,800	80
8000	4125	52
1200	300	25
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	750	75
1000	500	50
1000	400	40
1000	300	30
1000	250	25
1000	100	10
1000	50	5
800	400	50
800	400	50
600	300	50
500	300	60
500	200	40
500	150	30
500	150	30
500	50	10
500	10	2
500	150	30
400	320	80
400	240	60
350	210	60
300	210	70
300	210	70
300	200	67
300	100	34
250	75	30
250	75	30
250	75	30
200	150	75
200	150	75
200	40	20
100	50	50
100	5	5
20	5	25
No data	30%	No data
No data	85%	No data
No data	100	No data
No data	10%	No data
No data	100	No data
300	No data	No data
<b>40,320</b>	<b>22,300</b>	



*“They [African Americans] give us gifts....even after buying things. Even sometimes they do barter, they are good, if they come every day they will help our business”.*

(Interview, Mr. K. Gyasi, craft seller at the Arts Centre, March 2012)

Although some traders expressed their gratitude for the gifts that the tourists continued to give them, responses from traders indicated their disappointment in the fact that tourists no longer gave gifts or had considerably reduced the frequency with which gifts were given:

*“At first, they gave us gifts after buying, but they have since changed”*

(Interview, Mr. K. Kunadu, crafts seller at Arts Centre, March 2012)

### **6.9.2 Cost of Purchasing Beaded Jewellery at the Arts Centre**

Beads are generally affordable at the Arts Centre, but some are extremely expensive especially for the pocket of the average Ghanaian. During informal discussions and interviews with some of the traders at the centre, it was found that the prices of beaded jewellery ranged from as low as GHC4 to as much as GHC50 per strand or per bauble, with the most expensive being the antique trade beads, which can exceed GHC100 . There are ‘set’ prices displayed for various beads; however these vary slightly from stall to stall as the structure of the beaded jewellery dictates its price range. For example although it is quite common for necklaces to cost significantly more than bracelets, anklets and earrings, this trend tends to reverse itself when it concerns trade beads, as some can cost as much as the price of six non-antique necklaces . Beads sold at the Arts Centre cost on average 50% more than those at large supplier markets. This is due to the annual taxes, stall rental costs, procurement costs and cost of labour in the redesigning of wholesale purchased beads. The cost of purchasing beads shows that sellers have the potential to capitalize on the Diaspora market and gain a decent income from African Americans and other tourists who are willing to make purchases.

## **6.10 Trader Incomes and Expenditure Patterns from Handicrafts**

One hundred and twenty four traders (from Cape Coast and Elmina) were asked various questions to elicit some details about how they spent money gained from craft sales and which area of expenditure was the most significant to them. As these questions were broad and open ended it was recognized that responses solicited could only be rough indicators of expenditure patterns. Obtaining reliable and detailed information on expenditure or incomes was difficult as was also found in a study by Van Eedon (2011) on informal trader incomes in South Africa. This was challenging because it required much time and a private place for an interview. The circumstances of this part of the research made this difficult: vendors would not have been prepared to sacrifice so much time and the place was not private. Nonetheless it was necessary to try to obtain a general picture. The responses about expenditure are shown in Table 6.9.

The first question involved asking respondents in which areas, in their opinion, they spent ‘most’ of their income. Initially about a third of respondents preferred not to identify a single area of main expenditure and gave answers grouping multiple categories (Table 6.9). The remaining respondents, who did identify one main category, are shown as the first eight areas of expenditure in Table 6.9. To present a clearer picture of the data, respondents who provided multiple categories of expenditure were initially grouped into one category, as shown in Table 6.9. These are explored in more detail in Table 6.10. Initial analysis found that investment in the business was the major priority for almost half of the ‘single category’ responses (34 out of 73). The next most significant expenditure category, mentioned by about a quarter of the traders, was ‘myself’. Evidently this, in addition to the ‘family’ category, is vague and warrants further investigation. Seeking further clarifications from respondents shed more light on the respondents’ definitions of ‘myself’ –that is what constituted looking after one’s self, as well as understanding what expenditure on ‘family’ entailed and other areas of importance upon which they spent their income on. In addition to business, education, household maintenance, family, savings, tax and food, clarified responses led to the discovery of additional categories such as healthcare, transport and entertainment and

Table 6.9 Main expenditure categories of traders

Area of expenditure	Number of respondents	% of sample
Investment in business	34	27
‘Myself’	18	15
Education	7	6
Household maintenance *	6	5
Family	4	3
Savings	2	2
Tax (business)	1	1
Food	1	1
Total	73	59
Multiple categories	45	36
N/A **	6	5
Grand total	124	100

\*household maintenance implies rent and bills

\*\*represents respondents who felt that the question was too private and therefore refused to provide an answer

Table 6.10 Trader expenditure patterns: categories of 50% or more of total

Area of expenditure	Number of respondents (124)	% of sample
Investment in business	34	27
Education	21	17
Food	13	10
Housing maintenance	13	10
Savings	7	6
Transport	2	2
Health care	1	1
Entertainment	1	1
Other	2	2
Total	94	76
Less than 50% on above	30	24
Grand total	124	100

Note: only the number of respondents who said they used 50% or more of income in an area is represented in the upper portion of table. The remaining respondents who spent fewer than half of their income in any number of these areas are depicted at the bottom of table.

others (church-related activities and charities).Also, in order to avoid possible conflicts with overlapping categories, clarified responses of similar variables were merged with

one another (for example expenditure put into one's business tax was still classified as *investment in business*) and categories were made as mutually exclusive as possible in order to easily distinguish trader expenditure paths. It became clear that further analysis was required to add some numerical content to expenditure categories and to determine exactly *what* percentage of trader income went into such areas. Therefore percentage breakdowns were sought from respondents. Respondents freely provided percentages that they felt best expressed numerically how they spent their income. Table 6.10 shows the patterns, where 50% or more of income was spent on any single area of expenditure. All amounts that ranked below 50% on any of the categories were merged and are represented in the lower half of the table, and although not significantly utilized as part of the main analysis, they are often used as a form of comparison and reference in the continuing discussions. Table 6.10 shows, that even after percentage allocations, reinvesting money gained through sales, into the running and functioning of the business, is *still* the most financially significant category to take a large portion ( $\geq 50\%$ ) of trader income. When traders were asked what they meant by investing in their businesses, the most mentioned response was the restocking of items. Other business-related spending mentioned included structural repairs, payment of taxes, maintenance of premises, shop assistant salaries and electricity bills (although some traders confessed that they did not need to pay for power because they had set up illegal connections, thus decreasing their financial outgoings). This practice is quite common amongst small, makeshift (often unregulated) businesses in Ghana, especially those in crowded markets that are struggling to survive and to save money in an economy that is saturated with large amounts of traders trying to sell their items, but few actually being able to afford to purchase any goods. It is common for a business or shop to free-load on the electrical power of their neighbouring shop or the main power supply serving the local area in an attempt to save money on electrical bills. Some do this illegally while others pay a usage fee to the shop owner.

It is clear that education, which was previously listed in Table 6.9 as being significant only amongst 6% of all respondents or amongst 10% of the 'single category' sample (7 out of 73), is actually the second most significant category in terms of budget allocation

(Table 6.10). This means that education was regarded as part of looking after oneself. The significance of daily essentials such as food and housing maintenance becomes much more evident in Table 6.10 as it showed that 10% of traders were spending at least half of their income from trading on food and another 10% were spending on housing maintenance.

The only other area of any significance was savings, as only 7 craft sellers out of 124 were able to or chose to keep 50% or more of their income as savings. Interestingly this same group did not mention business as an area in which they spent significantly. The only other areas in which this group spent on were food and housing maintenance. Several reasons may account for this; firstly that two of these respondents use table tops, which would not (apart from goods sold) require large amounts of investments such as rent, electricity and restructuring etc. Secondly the shop owners were possibly sales assistants or working for other people and thus did not have the personal financial responsibility of investing directly into the business.

The least mentioned areas of expenditure were healthcare and entertainment. Only one respondent (a 22 year old male) claimed to have spent 50% or more of his income on entertainment. Entertainment was defined by respondents as going out, clubbing and spending a night out on the town with friends. This finding of generally limited entertainment expenditure is characteristic of those with limited financial resources and engaged in vulnerable enterprises in the informal sector who cannot afford to spend significantly on non essential activities. However this does not imply that no other respondents spent on entertainment. Overall 22 respondents (of which 68% are male) used varying percentages of their income (fewer than 50%) for entertainment purposes. It was found that men spent slightly more than women in this category. For instance, men spent on average 13% whilst women spent 8% of their income on leisure activities. This suggests that, of the sample who did decide to invest in entertainment, men spent slightly higher portions of their sales income on entertainment than women. Various factors could account for this; first the activities that the male sample engages in may be more expensive than those undertaken by the women and thus require larger sums of

Table 6.11 Expenditure categories of 50% or more spent by men

Area of expenditure	Male	% of male sample
Investment in business	23	34
Education	16	24
Food	13	19
Household maintenance (rent and bills)	8	12
Savings	7	10
Total	67	99*

\* Table: totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Table 6.12 Expenditure categories of 50% or more spent by women

Area of expenditure	Female	% of female sample
Investment in business	11	52
Education	5	24
Food	0	0
Household maintenance (rent and bills)	5	24
Savings	0	0
Total	21	100

money, or men simply engage in more leisure activities than women within a given period of time. Spending on healthcare saw similar patterns as 21 respondents who also spent minimally in this area were mainly men (76%). Tables 6.11 and 6.12 represent a breakdown of the five main areas of income expenditure (50% or more) by gender. In this case only the five most mentioned single categories were used. A majority of the men (53 out of 68) identified investing in their businesses, education or food as one of their three main categories of expenditure. This trend parallels the roles that men play in many societies as the bread winners and providers of essentials such as education and food. Some respondents were more widespread in their financial allocations than others. As shown in the table, male respondents spent in *all* areas, including food and savings, while investment in business, education and household maintenance were the *only* three areas in which women spent significantly. According to both tables, investment in business is financially important to both sexes (as evidenced in the category seeing more

respondents allocating  $\geq 50\%$  of their income to it than any other category). Just over half (52%) of female respondents stated that investing in their businesses took 50% or more of their income, whilst this was so for just over a third (34%) of males. This shows that although investing in the business is the most significant area of expenditure in the entire sample as well as for both sexes, a higher percentage of women spent in this area than men, signifying a very business-oriented female demographic.

However this does not imply that the men are not as business-oriented as the women. The cultural norm that they provide for their families, and the consequent retention of significant incomes for 'chop money' (elaborated below), obviously hinders their ability to invest as significantly in their businesses as they may want to. The widespread nature of men's financial responsibilities as breadwinners in the home suggests that any income that women receive possesses a certain level of freedom that enables them to invest as desired. So for women who have handicraft businesses, investing significantly in the running of the business shows the level of financial significance that business women place on their businesses.

This does not imply that men would not have been as financially dedicated; however the level of responsibility in spending that the men have would have made this difficult. One may argue that this 'freedom' that women have in choosing how to spend their income, suggests that any areas of financial investment are made by choice and not out of necessity. Therefore women in the sample are more than likely *choosing* to invest significant amounts in their businesses, education and household maintenance and less significantly in healthcare and entertainment. Also the increasing and expensive price of healthcare is also a deterrent for many. Therefore decisions have to be made on what is the most urgent at any particular time. One may equally argue that the women *are* more business-oriented and that this is due in part to two aspects of Ghanaian culture; the historical belief that women (if and when they do engage in non-domestic commerce) are more likely to engage in informal trade and that the cultural norm of male household support gives them the freedom and desire to invest in their businesses once they do.

Another area for consideration is the low levels of national formal employment that on some level has forced a large share of the local population to seek quick and easy ways

of gaining an income. Women, more than men have become prone to this form of commerce as the perceived versatility of informal trade, in terms of its quick ‘set up and pack up’ has encouraged their entrepreneurial spirit. However in cases where the women are single parents and are the only breadwinners in their family, expenditure is likely to be spent in all the areas mentioned, including food. This is in contrast to Table 6.12 which suggests some areas of expenditure are supplemented, either by a spouse or family member. There was little difference between men and women in their expenditure patterns on education. However, women (24%) were much more likely than men (12%) to spend on housing maintenance. As household maintenance in this case does not signify traditional domestic activities such as cleaning or cooking (of which females are commonly associated), but rather rent and bill payments, it demonstrates that females in this study are contributing financially (as well as physically) to the maintenance of the home.

Food was highly significant in terms of gender expenditure patterns. Results showed that *no* female traders spent significantly (50% or more) on food. When women did spend on food, however, they spent from 0-15% of their income on it, which is, on average, fewer than the males spent. Males spent amounts ranging from 5%-40% with the most common amount being 10%. This suggests that food is being supplemented, more than likely by the male breadwinners. This is undoubtedly because of the structure of gendered roles in Ghanaian society in which the cultural ideal has been for men to be the *main* breadwinners of the home. Very importantly, it is regarded as the norm for men to provide ‘*chop money*’ (daily/weekly food salary) to their partners specifically to buy groceries and prepare meals for the family thus relieving their female partners of assuming the responsibility of spending considerable amounts on food themselves.

But this also shows that because women were relieved of the financial responsibility of spending on food, they were able to spend more on their businesses. This is implied because women who spent significantly on business investment (spending on average 62% in this area) chose to spend on average only 4% on food (Table 6.13).



Table 6.13 Women's expenditure on business investment versus that of food

Amount spent on business investment (%)	Amount spent on food (%)
80	0
80	0
80	0
75	10
60	5
60	0
50	15
50	10
50	0
50	0

Table 6.14 Breakdown of spending on savings (<50%) by women

% of expenditure on savings	Number of females	% of sample
40	1	10
30	1	10
20	3	30
10	3	30
5	2	20
Total	10	100

In relation to more general figures, food is an important item of household expenditure for most Ghanaian households and accounts for two fifths (40%) of household expenditure in the Ghanaian livelihoods survey of 2008 (GLLS 5, 2008). The survey reported that households in the Central Region (which include Cape Coast and Elmina) spent even more (54%) of their expenditure on food (GLSS 5, 2008). But it is important to note that the survey represented *all* individual spending in a household and not just from craft traders. Table 6.12 also shows that, in addition to food, no women kept 'significant' portions of their income as *savings*. Table 6.14 explores female expenditure on savings in more detail and shows that the ten women spent on average 17% of their income on savings, with the largest amount being 40%. We have shown that the lack of spending on food was due to it being supplemented as a consequence of the breadwinner's responsibility. Similar reasons apply to the category of savings, in that

women rely or expect their male counterparts to save money for the family. Further queries did show this to some extent, though minimally. With the exception of one woman who claimed that she was unable to save any money because she lived from hand to mouth and had very little left over, the rest stated that they could not afford it as the low sales and low profits from handicraft purchases prevented them from having surplus cash for significant spending on savings, and that when possible their male partners helped in that respect. So although a cash flow problem is one of the main reasons for women's minimal spending on savings, there is a dependency on their male counterparts to supplement them in this area, which (in the midst of low sales) may make women feel less determined or required to save significantly.

### **6.11 Expenditure Patterns of Bead Sellers**

The most significant areas of expenditure by bead sellers were also investing in the business and education (Table 6.15). In this, they were similar to the overall sample which also spent significantly in these two main areas (Table 6.10). This also indicates that African American tourist expenditure on beaded jewellery has contributed to the education of bead sellers and/or their families. However, bead sellers were slightly more likely to spend more on education than investing in the business. This is likely due to the size of their businesses, which may not require them to invest large amounts in their business, leaving more money for education. This is because, out of the 14 bead-only sellers, 8 use table tops, trays and kiosks to sell their goods, while 6 have mini shops. In addition to education and investing in the business, the only other major outgoings were food and housing maintenance, which each saw the same percentage of bead sellers (10%), spending significantly in this area. Some respondents did not spend any money on certain areas such as transportation, entertainment and in some cases rent and bills due to their age and cohabitation with extended or immediate family which saw income being spread throughout the household and parents, spouses or elders often supplementing their subsistence needs. Unusable and vague percentage combinations (for instance food and education - 30%) that would not allow for accurate predictions were removed from the data analysis.

Table 6.15 Bead seller expenditure patterns: categories of 50% or more

Area of expenditure	Bead sellers (62)	Non-bead sellers (62)	All handicraft sellers (124)
Investing in business	15	19	34
Education	20	2	22
Food	6	7	13
Housing maintenance	6	7	13
Savings	2	5	7
Less than 50% spent	13	22	35
Total	62	62	124

Overall, trader expenditure patterns suggest that cash earnings from craft sales impact on three main livelihood assets; physical capital, human capital and natural capital. The physical capital of handicraft traders is influenced through the investment in businesses that traders have made in their businesses and maintaining a home through the payment of rent and bills. Human capital is impacted through financial investments in education and in health (on a minor scale) while food as a form of natural capital (and as a prerequisite for sustainable human capital) is also impacted by tourist expenditure.

## 6.12 Summary

This chapter has shown that though a significant percentage of customers visiting the craftsmen surveyed have been shown to be African American, traders still considered this number as quite low. The main concern with the Africa American tourist market has been their low visitor numbers and their low sales. So the problem was not only that tourists were not visiting as much as traders had hoped but more importantly that these visitations, when made, were not translating into an equal amount of purchases. It is understandable that not every visit to a store has to automatically mean a purchase has to be made but for the sake of the ‘tourist trader’ who’s main source market is the tourist the low scale of patronage shows a high vulnerability and means that traders have to capitalize on the insufficient number of visits in any way that they can creating a vicious cycle

## **Chapter 7. The Handicraft Commodity/Beneficiary Chain**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter continues to focus on the handicraft commodity chain and traces the impact of one particular element in contemporary Ghanaian handicrafts which is particularly popular with African American tourists: beaded crafts. The idea of investigating the social and economic impacts of particular types of production and consumption by tracing, in detail, one product along a commodity chain has proved to be fruitful for a number of disciplines. Commodity chain analysis has given insight into the complex web of people involved in different sectors of production and consumption. It provides insight into the power relationships that exist within the chain and how financial and material resources are distributed or flow within their parameters. It sheds light on the input and output structure of commodities and the relationship between products and services along the chain, as well as identifying actors and processes that contribute to the origin and completion of the commodity. Identifying the geographical dispersion and saturation of impacts along the chain and its associated constraints and opportunities has also proved beneficial when analyzing the craft commodity network. For instance, analysis of the Haitian handicraft sector identified various constraints and opportunities and explored issues such as the need for product differentiation, exploring new markets and improving the efficiency of actors in the chain (USAID, 2006). Value chain analysis of the Ugandan crafts sector identified various deficiencies in its productions, organization and marketing and the political and economic influences that impacted on the effective production and consumption of crafts (ITC, 2005). Commodity chain analysis has also explored and found how valuable the processes within chains and networks are to the manufacture, utilization and even discarding of goods and services.

This chapter will explore the resource networks, production networks (processes, employment and earnings), design networks (value adding stage), wholesale and retail networks and the consumer network in the beaded craft commodity chain. It will also

Table 7.1 Roles played by actors in the beaded crafts commodity chain

Main role(s)	Actor	Area	All Roles Played
Producers of raw materials (glass etc )	Local : manufacturers of mortar and pestles, kilns and other tools	Country-wide	Producer/retailer
	International: manufacturing companies of bottled beverages , louvre glass and kilns		Producer/retailer
Providers of raw materials	Local: louvre blade companies, beverage manufacturers, Gao glass merchants	Odumasi-Krobo, Koforidua and Accra	Wholesaler /retailer
	International; Same as international producers above		
Production/ manufacturing	Cedi Factory	Odumasi-Krobo	Producer/wholesaler/retailer
	Informal small scale businesses		
Retail/wholesale	Koforidua Crafts Market	Koforidua	Designer /wholesaler/retailer
	Arts Centre	Accra	Designer/retailer
	Cape Coast, Elmina	Cape Coast, Elmina	Designer/retailer/wholesaler
Consumers	African American tourists	Accra	Consumers

explore the various actors involved in transporting the craft commodity on to the various markets and the various financial transactions made along the way. Table 7.1 tabulates the kind of actors involved in the chain and the roles they play in the production and distribution of beaded crafts.

## 7.2 Handicraft Stock Procurement Channels

During interviews with Elmina and Cape Coast traders and informal discussions with Arts Centre traders, the following question was posed, “Where and from whom do you procure your raw materials and your finished handicrafts from?” Sellers in the Central Region sample were asked this question first and the results (Table 7.2) were used to explore other sources further, specifically from craft sellers in Accra (Tables 7.3a and 7.3b). Though some of the responses were vague (for example; *the immediate area, Volta Region, Aburi or Bonwire*), others were more area-specific (*from Koforidua or Koforidua Market, bead makers in the village, or from the villages*). This is because traders were once again very cautious about revealing specific procurement details and so responses in this category did not include the names of specific individuals or businesses. Nonetheless, it was found that the paths and processes of procuring and supplying handicraft items to the customer varies and is somewhat complex. Traders combine various procurement channels, product creation and recreation to supply the finished product to the customer.

All traders in this sample procured their items either readymade or partially made from other suppliers. These ‘other suppliers’ involved internal and external suppliers; that is other traders in the vicinity as well as those on the periphery and beyond. The only exception was the shell sellers who simply found shells on the beach and personalized them for sale. It is common for retailers to act as formal or informal wholesalers or suppliers themselves because it is considered a financial advantage to capitalize on the demand by other sellers. When sellers take on the role of informal wholesalers, the level of demand often dictates the prices for supply, and these prices are usually at the seller’s discretion. For example during a ‘mock’ purchase of a Kente shirt at the Arts Centre, the shirt which was out of stock at the time had to be procured from another seller nearby.

After being asked to follow the first seller to another seller who apparently had that particular shirt in stock, negotiations were conducted between the first seller and the supplier to reduce the price of item. After brief negotiations, the supplier insisted that

GHC25 (£8)<sup>28</sup> was the ‘best’ price that they could give. A version of the shirt which had been priced at GHC20 by the first seller had increased to GHC25. By taking me to the other seller, the supplier had obviously realized that there was a level of demand for the product and in most cases where there is a demand people are often willing to pay higher prices for the product. But it was also realized that this increase possibly acted as a sort of ‘finder’s fee’ for the first seller. But as further investigations could not be conducted into the business strategies of the sellers without being too intrusive, this could only be speculated on. But this is not an uncommon practice in Ghana. Selling prices of identical or similar goods are usually fixed but tend to fluctuate based not only on supplier prices but also on the trader’s circumstance. This is because like many other selling strategies around the world craft traders may at times reduce the prices of crafts if they have not been sold by the end of the day, but in other cases, they may rather increase prices in order to compensate for the minimal sales made during that day. But formal wholesale procurements usually dictate that procuring items of 5 pieces or more receives a discount. Then the crafts seller could add the additional cost that would provide him with a profit.

Results showed that the most common area and the first point of call for the procurement of items by these crafts sellers was the immediate area (in most cases this was the local market; LM) in which the handicraft traders conducted their business. The majority of traders in Elmina and Cape Coast (62%) would procure their items from other retailers, either in the immediate trading area, the adjacent market, the down town mini markets or shops that also sold handicrafts. These suppliers in turn would procure their items from other traders in the larger markets nearby or in the nearest town.

Procuring readymade items from Accra was also a common occurrence as the connotation of affordability and variety was synonymous with getting goods from Accra craft markets where the intense competition provided handicraft traders with the ability to bargain for items. The Accra handicraft market was regularly mentioned to have a wide variety of handicrafts items for sale and purchase. The market which is considered

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<sup>28</sup> The exchange rate used throughout this chapter is GHC2.83 to GBP1

a giant amongst giants in the country's handicraft sector consists of many items that are also sourced or procured from countries in West Africa such as Mali, Togo, Nigeria the Ivory Coast and Senegal (ADM, 2002).

Table 7.2 gives an idea of the most used procurement channels by craft traders in Elmina and Cape Coast while Tables 7.3 and 7.3a give an idea of where specific handicraft items like beads and Kente fabric are procured from craft traders in the Arts Centre. According to Art Centre traders, resources like wood, clay and fabrics are mainly procured within the southern region of the country, whilst beads and its raw materials are sourced mainly from the Eastern Region. Areas like Koforidua were most popular for procuring beads because of its relative closeness to Accra. As evidenced in the mock purchase of the Kente shirt, procuring items from other sellers in the centre is also done by Arts Centre sellers, but only on a 'need to do' basis. Because the Arts Centre has production areas, retail areas and the Makola market nearby internal procurements are made easy. But the intense competition in the centre means that sellers are finding new paths and means to procure the most unique item possible.

According to traders, specific areas of procurement would depend on whether the item is in its raw form, semi-processed form or ready-made. The Ashanti Region and Volta Regions were the most popular regions for procuring Kente fabric as most of the Kente sellers interviewed said that they procured their readymade hand woven Kente fabrics from Bonwire. Though it was rare for stock or raw materials to be procured from the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions of the country (see Tables 7.3 and 7.3a), due to what traders described as '*an impossible distance to travel regularly*'<sup>29</sup>, in a few cases, trips to the northern part of Ghana as well as to Togo and the Ivory Coast were made by traders who had the finances to support this (Tables 7.2, 7.3 and 7.3a). Alternatively, where it was a financial impracticality to travel so far, merchants or middle men that would travel to these places would bring the items to the traders to purchase. However, those respondents who used merchants explained that they were people that they had developed a friendship with and had known for some time and

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<sup>29</sup> these regions are approximately 600 km (370 miles) from the capital



therefore had acquired a business-client relationship that allowed for discounts and the negotiation of other item costs. The wood carving village of *Ahwiaa* is another area for wooded craft procurements but is rarely used because transportation of goods from the area to Elmina, Cape Coast or Accra would prove expensive and would warrant a hefty cost-plus approach to product pricing.

### **7.3 Self Assembled Handicraft Items.**

Self-assemblage is an important process in the network beneficiary chain as it utilizes many procurement processes, channels and design strategies. One of the processes involves manufacturing one's own handicrafts from combining other readymade items or raw materials. For example F. Ako (Table 7.3a) purchases her loose beads or strung beads from individual sales men in Koforidua and then restrings them herself, she adds shells, and baubles bought from Cape Coast to the desired colour combinations or designs; such as necklaces or waist beads.

Another process involves creating beaded products by sourcing local materials such as bamboo, raffia and shells, from local forests and beaches and then constructing the desired piece with readymade embellishments sourced from other markets. For example, K. Gyasi explained that his process involved retrieving the bamboo from the forest himself, fashioning the piece into the desired size and shape, air-drying it, coating in a preserving solution purchased from the Accra market and then finally adding embellishments such as beads and miniature metal lockets bought from other markets. There are other reassembling and design processes which involves varied combinations of either of these strategies.

For example trade bead sellers often purchase long stands of trade beads and restring them into bracelets or anklets that they can then resell and make a profit on. In other cases the entire strand of beads is de-strung and sold as single baubles, or as bracelets and anklets which can be considerably more expensive than the strand itself.

Table 7.2 Procurement areas by traders in Elmina and Cape Coast

Procurement area	Number of traders	Percentage (%)
LM only	77	62
LM, ACC	19	15
ACC only	10	8
LM, ACC	3	2
Ahwiaa only	2	2
ACC, KMI, Ahwiaa	2	2
Northern Region, others	1	1
International procurement areas		
Togo, Ivory Coast	2	2
Burkina Faso	1	1
Unused responses*	7	6
Total	124	101

\*includes procurement channels only used by one person each as well as respondents who refused to answer the question

LM: Local market, ACC: Accra craft markets, KMI: Kumasi

Table 7.3 Geographical sourcing of handicraft items from a selected number of traders in the Arts Centre

Name of trader	Item sold	Procurement area
M. Adjei	Kumasi slippers	Kumasi
	Kente slippers	Kumasi and Accra
	Kente cloth	Bonwire and Volta Region
	African shirts	Self-manufactured in Accra
	Beads	Koforidua
C. Osei	Beads	Koforidua
	Combined crafts Kente	Bonwire
M. Agyemang	Combined crafts	Volta region, Eastern Region, Accra, Aburi
	Arts and crafts	Ahwiaa
	Kente	Bonwire
	Beads	Koforidua
Regina	Beads	Koforidua
D. Gyamfi	Kente	Bonwire
	Beads	Koforidua
	Paintings	Self made in Accra
K. Gyasi	Beads	Koforidua
		Ohwim, Kumasi, Koforidua
		Krobo Odumasi, Koforidua
	Jewellery	Local forests
	Kente sandals	Accra
K. Kunadu	Beads	Koforidua
	Kente	Bonwire, Volta Region
K. Richard	Carvings	Volta Region
	Beads	Krobo, Koforidua, Volta

These strategies or practices are all executed among the traders to gain a financial advantage through product differentiation and rebranding as well as catering to the desires of their customers.

#### 7.4 Bead Procurement Channels

Beads sold in the Arts Centre are sourced both locally and internationally. Unlike other crafts which are source primarily internally, the majority of beads sold by Arts Centre traders are sourced locally from a number of local manufacturing and design centres.

Table 7.3a Continuation of Table 7.3

Name of trader	Item sold	Procurement area
H. Sikira	Shea butter	Shea butter tree in Tamale, Wa, Bimbila, Salaga, Navrongo (Northern Region of Ghana)
A. Pokuaa	Kente	Kumasi
	Jewellery beads	Koforidua
		Kenya (Imported)
A. Boating	Shirts and dresses	Other traders in Arts Centre
	Jewellery beads	Koforidua
	Jewellery absent of beads	Kumasi
O. Adutwum	Kente	Bonwire, Ntonso, Kona, Adumase; Kumasi
P. Willie	Beads	Koforidua Nigeria
Olad	Mask , wood carvings	Villages in Kokubin and Aburi
Kamal	Wood carvings	Villages in Kpando (Volta Region)
S. Joe	Wood carvings Polish	Suhum, Kpando, Aburi Shoe polish
F. Ako	Jewellery beads	Koforidua
		Cape Coast
J. Abubakari	Cow tail skin bags	Northern Region

Traders interviewed in the ‘Centre’ said that at least 70% of beads sold were sourced from local markets or manufacturing companies. Although there are a number of other bead making companies in and around Accra (for example T.K. Beads near Accra; TEK Glass Beads Industry, TET Beads Industry, Dan’s Beaded Handicraft near Kpong and Abompe Traditional Bead Making Village in Anyinam), Koforidua and Odumasi-Krobo are considered the two main areas for purchasing locally made beads that are affordable and authentic and as a result of this, authentic bead production has for the most part, been confined to the Odumasi area. And as a result of this, Odumasi-Krobo is considered the bead procurement capital of the country. Figure 7.1 illustrates the flow of bead production and the various stakeholders involved in its production. This bead production and distribution network consists of consumers, retailers, wholesalers, Artisans (manufacturers) and exporters. Amongst these are the four main tourism actors;

the African American tourist (the consumer), the Arts Centre trader (retailer), the Koforidua Market seller (wholesaler) and the bead manufacturers in Odumasi-Krobo (e.g. Cedi Factory). Almost all the actors (both formal and informal) at some point interact and trade with the Koforidua market centre as it is the main contact point in the chain of distribution between the Arts Centre traders and the bead manufacturing suppliers (including the large factory or small scale businesses). The international market in the diagram consists of independent Ghanaian bead merchants who travel outside of the country to procure ‘special’ beads, international merchants who transport foreign jewellery into the country and glass manufacturers who import glass products. Bead exports to large craft organizations also connect locally-made jewellery beads to the worldwide market.

#### **7.4.1 Cost of Procuring Beads and Other Handicraft Products**

In addition to seeking information about procurement channels, traders were entreated to reveal the costs of procuring these items from the manufacturer or retail outlet (Table 7.4). The traders who agreed to reveal these details explained that items are usually sold to customers at double the manufacturers selling price. Data gathered from traders estimated that sellers procure GHC100-GHC500 worth of beads per week. This amount is highly dependent on sales figures and profit margins for that period as traders cannot afford to restock when their funds are very low and must clear some existing stock before replenishments can be made. Some traders admitted quite sadly that the period between securing a consignment of goods and selling it off can take up to a month. One trader revealed that he purchases on average GHC500 worth of stock, including GHC250 worth of beads every week and then sells for double that price or slightly higher (Interview with Mr. Agyeman, February 2012). This however would depend on the profits gained from craft sales. In cases when retailers cannot immediately afford to pay the stock merchant in full, credit can be offered by the wholesaler but this depends on level of trust built between traders and wholesalers. Nonetheless this shows the importance of the long term arrangements. Table 7.5 takes this exploration of cost further provides a list of the main actors in the chain, a select group of beaded crafts and

Table 7.4 Cost of procuring and reselling a sample of handicraft products

Name of trader	Item sold	Cost of procurement (GHC)	Price sold to customers (GHC)
M. Adjei	No data	No data	Half of purchase price
C. Osei	No data	No data	10
	Trade beads	15	30
M. Agyemang	Kente(single weave)	50-100	100-200
	Kente (double weave)	100-250	200-500
	Kente (triple weave)	150-500	300-1000
K. Kunadu	Glass beads	5	10
	Trade beads	10	20
A. Pokuaa	Cow horn necklace	5	10
	Bone necklace	5	10
	Coconut shell necklace	3.50	7

tabulates the cost for procuring these items and the final customer selling price as it moves from one set of actors to another at each stage of the chain. As can be seen, a 100% cost-plus approach is the most common pricing strategy used by traders. The next section explores the roles of the other actors in the chain in more detail and provides case studies of two bead manufacturers, one small scale and the other large scale.

#### **7.4.2 Locally Sourced Beads; Cedi Factory, One Man Businesses and Other Traders**

The Odumasi-Krobo area has an undisclosed number of small scale individual bead manufacturing businesses, a market at Agormanya that also sells beads and the largest bead manufacturing company in the country, Cedi Factory. The area at one point had four medium scale bead manufacturing companies and one large scale company, however only the large scale company, called Cedi Factory, has survived. The demise of these companies is a result of two main factors; firstly, the growth of informal small

Table 7.5 Prices paid for a selection of beads at each stage of the buying and selling chain

	African American customers	Art Centre traders		Koforidua Market traders		Cedi Beads Industry
Type of beaded jewellery (necklaces)	Customer purchase price (GHC)	Selling price (GHC)	Procurement price (GHC)	Selling price (GHC)	Procurement price (GHC)	Selling price (GHC)
Antique trade beads	30	20-30	10-15**	20-60	10-15**	50-600*
Ghana glass beads	10	10	5	5	2.50	8-20*
Kenya beads	10	10	5	5	2.50	No data
Chinese glass beads	4-20	4-20	2-10	2-10	3.50-5	No data
Coconut shells and beads	7	7	3.50	3.50	1.50	No data

\*retail price

\*\*wholesale procurement costs

scale bead manufacturing businesses and secondly the competitive strength and growing success of Cedi Factory. Cedi Factory garnered international recognition from the regular exposure of the company and its proprietor to a worldwide audience through publications, bead workshops, exhibitions, lectures and conferences in Finland and the USA, and it was this international acknowledgement that eventually made Cedi Factory the most recognized centre for bead production in Ghana.

This international popularity has also stemmed from bead exports, as Cedi Factory exports around 20% of its beads to the USA and Europe: two of the world's largest importers of home accessories and crafts (USAID, 2009). Ghana and other sub-Saharan African handicraft producers (including South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania) have made a successful impact on the international handicraft exports market, with Ghana exporting \$11.3million in 2002 (USAID,2006).

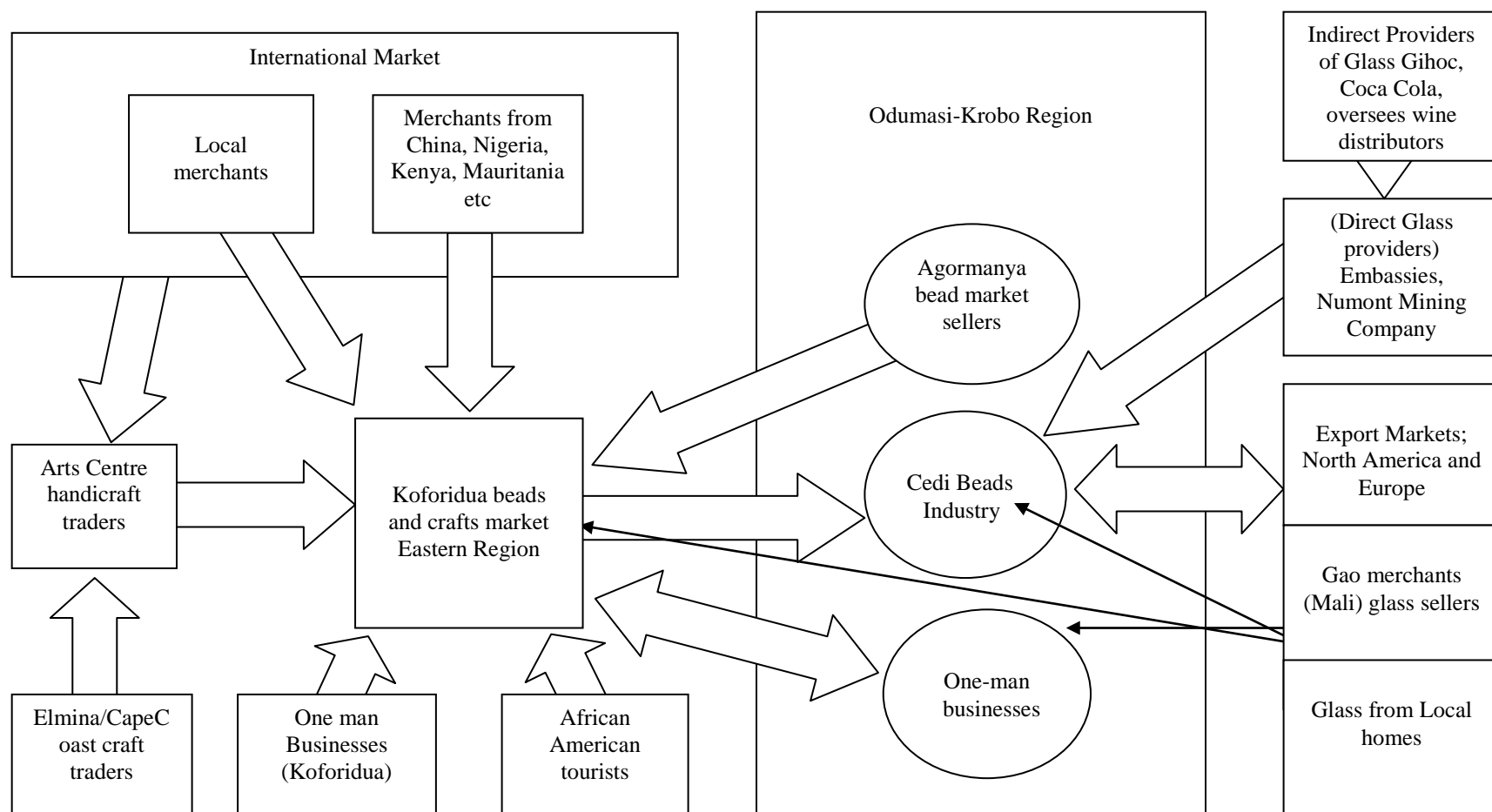


Figure 7.1 Bead handicraft commodity chain



Thus the Ghanaian export market has had an established international presence for some time, and now the growing number of independent exporters who use online shopping resources have also helped fuel its bead heritage. As a result of the company's increasing exposure and acceptance, the tourist market was steered towards Cedi Factory, leaving the remaining competition vulnerable, and low patronage eventually forced them to shut down. According to Mr. Cedi, some former owners of the defunct businesses have now turned to informal trade as a means of survival and maintaining a livelihood.

Referred to in local business jargon as *one-man businesses*, these small scale businesses (which will be discussed further) have made considerable impact in the bead manufacturing market and have put the larger businesses out of work. As bead production became more lucrative and gained international acclaim, the Krobo people decided to profit from their heritage by creating their own businesses. To shed more light on this issue an interview was conducted in March 2012 at the Koforidua Market with Mr. Joshua Nyumah, a former owner of one of the defunct bead manufacturing business. Mr. Nyumah explained that he had previously owned a factory a couple of years ago, but it had since shut down. According to him, a lack of profits coupled with the uphill battle of trying to compete with other bead businesses but especially one-man businesses who were selling similar beads at the Koforidua market for much lower prices, forced him to reconsider other alternatives to sustaining a livelihood. He went on to explain that the nature of these small scale businesses was such that they had fewer overheads and therefore did not have to pay shop maintenance staff salaries and could therefore afford to offer beads at base prices. But he also was aware of the fact that although overheads may be low, informal small scale businesses would still have to pay additional workers to help with production, unless they relied on unpaid family labour and would undoubtedly have low levels of productivity than larger businesses. But in spite of these, he still found it the most cost effective way to sustain his livelihood. But Mr. Nyumah's position was unique in the sense that not only had he created a small bead manufacturing business of his own and become part of an NGO bead making association and Director of 'Krobodan Beads', but he also sourced some of his beads

from the very businesses that had caused him to shut down in the first place. The next section takes a detailed look at Cedi Beads Industry or Cedi Factory, as it is simply known. Interviewed in February 2012 at his factory, Cedi (as the owner is fondly known) provided information on the background of his company, the process of bead production and the tourist experience. As the only surviving large-scale bead supply and manufacturing company in Odumasi-Krobo, Cedi Factory is an important stakeholder in the bead commodity chain. So this section explores how purchases made at the factory (by tourists as well as by traders) affect company profits and production strategies.

### **7.4.3 Cedi Beads Industry**

The company is located in Odumasi Town, approximately 25 miles from Koforidua Market in Odumasi-Krobo, the heart of bead production (Figure 7.2). Cedi Beads, in addition to being a manufacturing company also runs bead making workshops and tours. Paid classes and demonstrations in bead production are also undertaken in recycled translucent glass beads, powdered glass beads, ‘Bodom’ bead making, painted/glazed beads, combination beads, history of beads, Batik, Tie and Dye, Kente and basket weaving. Cedi Beads Industry is owned and run by Mr. Nomada Djaba, one of the best known bead makers in Ghana. Mr. Djaba is known affectionately by locals as Mr. Cedi, due to the year in which he was born, which coincided with the country’s independence and its consequent adoption of the Ghanaian Cedi.

Currently, Mr. Cedi is also the President of the Manya Krobo Bead Association, a founding member of the Ghana Bead Society and a member of the International Society of Bead Makers (Cedi Beads Industry, 2012). As previously stated, Cedi has travelled extensively, and has marketed his company and its products through the various workshops, conferences, presentations, seminars and lectures attended in Europe and America. Cedi Beads employs twenty-four staff; eleven women and thirteen men, who are involved in all the technical aspects of bead production such as pounding glass, creating moulds, polishing beads and threading.



Figure 7.2 Cedi Beads Industry  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (February, 2012)

This also includes 3 apprentices; two women and one man. Employees are no longer paid monthly salaries but are currently paid on a commission. According to Cedi, this is because paid salaries were enabling workers to 'lounge around and not pull their weight'. Workers were avoiding any strenuous work because they knew that they would be paid at the end of the month in spite of output levels. Interviews conducted with three employees of Cedi Factory in May 2012 found that workers are currently paid 20% of the value of the amount of jewellery that is 'sold' rather than 'made'. In other words, employees only get paid when their items are sold. This seemed to be another strategy to guarantee that workers would put additional effort into ensuring that the beads created would be of the highest quality and therefore sellable as well as ensuring that supply would not exceed demand.

*"Goods must be sold before workers can be paid. If the products are not sold, the company is not ready to pay us, so we keep on making the beads nonetheless, but when the visitors come and buy a lot, it is then that we get much more from our commission"*

(Interview, Johnson Anarglatey, Cedi Factory employee, May 2012).

According to Mr. Cedi, workers can earn up to GHC500 a month depending on their productivity. In an interview with Ms. Alice Nartey (a Cedi Factory employee), she supported this and explained that, for her, the Emancipation festival period of July and August of 2011 were the most profitable months, as she received as much as GHC400-450 (£141-159) from items sold . However, the amounts received tend to vary over time;

*“My pay changes from month to month, so it depends. Some months I get GHC 350 (almost £123), other times it is GHC200 (£70). But on average I would say that I make GHC150-200 (£53 - 70). When the visitors come a lot, like say during the PANAFEST Festival, I can get twice or even more”*

(Interview, Alice Nartey, Cedi Beads Industry, February 2012).

These amounts also vary from employee to employee. Your status in the company or the kind of bead production engaged in is also reflected in the amount of commission received. For example, senior bead workers tend to make more money because they are usually given the responsibility of working with expensive beads such as the Bodom and the Venetian Beads. Mr. Johnson Anarglatey; a senior beads craftsman confirmed that although he makes anywhere from GHC100-650, that this is highly dependent on not just his position, but on visitor numbers and customer purchases at the factory;

*“I can make from GHC500-650 on good days. However, during the ‘lean’ season, wages can come down to as low as GHC100, but on average its 250-500”*

(Interview, Johnson Anarglatey, May 2012)

Apprentices on the other hand are not entitled to receive any income until they pass the 3 month probationary period (Interview with Ethel Ayarkor; Apprentice at Cedi Factory, May 2012). The amount of money that Cedi workers receive is quite significant as most civil servants in Ghana are paid on average GHC200-300 a month, so working in the factory may provide a reasonable income by Ghanaian standards. During a tour of his company, it was observed that Cedi factory makes much use of locally produced or sourced tools and materials. Most of the tools utilized are made from wood, clay and metal that are sourced and fashioned locally. In the design section of his company, Mr.

Cedi has an array of foreign equipment that he uses in fashioning his beads. This includes gas cylinders (propane gas), oxygen tanks, mini blow torches and Hot Box Mini Kilns. Glass is the main component in the production of the majority of beads at Cedi Factory. A small number of plastic waist beads are used as accompaniments and embellishments, but it is the glass beads which are predominant. The glass usually takes the form of beer bottles, champagne bottles, wine bottles, medicinal bottles and hard liquor bottles of various shapes, sizes and colours (Figure 7.3). It is these variations in colours that enable the spectrum of colours that glass beads possess. Cedi Factory rarely purchases this raw material but usually obtains its glass bottles free of charge. The company acquires its bottles from four main sources; refuse dumps (discarded bottles), mining areas such as Newmont Mining Firm Ghana, E.U. embassies in Accra and Gao glass merchants. Bottles obtained from embassies and Mining companies consist mainly of imported spirits (due to the prestige of well known brands such as Gordon's, St Rey and Takao etc). However, local distilleries such as Gihoc Distilleries, Kasapreko Wines (manufacturers of local alcoholic beverages) and the Ghana Coca Cola bottling companies, statistically when compared to foreign imports, are said to be 'insignificant' in the market. Gao glass traders are nomadic merchants from Mali who reside in Ghana. They move from home to home buying used glass products from residents or obtaining discarded glass and reselling them to market traders. The glass obtained from embassies and Newmont are given to 'Cedi' free of charge while Gao merchants sell their glass products to the factory. Gao men usually sell a sack full of empty glass bottles for about GHC5 or GHC0.10 per bottle which is considered very cheap by Ghanaian standards. However, through personal friendships and business partnerships with government officials (a result of his popularity and international acclaim), Cedi has secured a steady flow of glass bottles from the various embassies in the country which usually dispose of these bottles after parties, dinners, seminars and conferences. During glass bead production, coloured glass bottles are thoroughly washed and either broken into shards or fragments or ground into powder using various systems of crushing that determines the type of bead to be produced. The recycled transparent bead process requires a large stone and a stone surface for crushing glass into tiny fragments, while the recycled glass



Figure 7.3 Display of coloured glass bottles used in bead production at Cedi Factory  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

powder beads are more suited to the metal mortar and pestle system of crushing (Figure 7.4). Although Cedi Beads has an automated crusher, the company prefers to use the manual system, which according to Mr. Cedi enables the producer to control the speed and intensity of crushing. This is because the varying degrees of coarseness or smoothness of the glass fragments have different artistic uses. Therefore Cedi may decide on a specific level of grain for a design of bead. These fragments or powder are then intricately poured into various clay moulds. Clay moulds are created using Ant Hill Clay. These moulds are cream coloured miniature moulds fashioned out of the Ant clay and used as casings in which powdered or crushed glass are poured before entering the





Figure 7.4 Crushed glass in mortar  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)



Figure 7.5 Mr. Cedi showing the various tools and materials used in glass bead production  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

kiln. According to Mr. Cedi, the ants possess special saliva that they use during the creation of the hill, and that it is this saliva that provides the clay with its adhesiveness and heat-resistant properties, making it an ideal material for firing in the kiln.

The internal shapes of the moulds that create the bead shapes are created from raw clay, which is pounded and rolled onto a table using a makeshift rolling pin made from a cassava stick. The flattened clay is then shaped with a wooden bat and then cut into the desired size and shape. Various shapes such as the star, the cross, the circle and the Tilapia fish shape are some of the most common moulds used in the creation of the various shapes of beads. This prepared mould is firstly left to air dry at room temperature for several days, and then dried in the sun for another 3-4 days before use. The final mould is then coated with kaolin to prevent beads from sticking to them and the crushed glass poured into them for firing. Sieves are then used to sift the powdered glass into the moulds. Beads are usually fired in a kiln for 25-45 minutes at extremely high temperatures of 600-1000 degrees Celsius. They are then polished by hand with sand and water over a slab of stone for 10-15 minutes. Beads are often taken out of the kiln prior to calcification so they can be shaped when malleable. An awn is then used to pierce a string hole in the semi-solid beads. Figure 7. 5 shows Mr. Cedi and a display of the tools and materials used in glass bead production.

Cedi Factory utilizes two main methods of bead production; the local/traditional technique and the Venetian technique. The local method of bead production produces five types of beads such as the recycled 'trade' beads, recycled transparent beads, recycled glass powder beads, glazed or painted beads, translucent or opaque and Bodom beads. The Venetian technique produces the Chevron Bead. The Chevron bead and its manufacturing processes are significant to the study as Mr. Cedi, as well as Arts Centre and Koforidua traders, have repeatedly singled it out as the most revered and financially patronized bead amongst African American tourists. This type of bead is produced using what is known as the Venetian technique. This involves copying the original bead which originated in Venice in Italy. The technique, which Mr. Cedi learnt during one of his trips to Italy, involves the use of highly technical equipment, oxygen and propane gas. The unique layers of the Chevron are said to be created from the meandering or twisting



process used in their production which involves wrapping melted glass around an iron rod in graduating layers and colours<sup>30</sup>. Due to its high-end price range, the bead is normally used as a pendant, around which smaller glass beads, plastic waist beads or other raw materials are placed.

Many of the company's beaded products can be purchased online through [Africancraft.com](http://Africancraft.com), with prices ranging from \$1.25 to \$25 per strand. Beads sold at a Cedi factory come in three forms; beaded jewellery, beaded items and loose beads. The prices given below do not apply to every kind of bead but vary based on the type of bead manufactured. Loose beads cost GHC0.50 and GHC1 per bauble while bracelets cost on average GHC3-5. An authentic Chevron trade bead (bauble) and a strand of Chevron beads are the most expensive beads sold and cost GHC50 and GHC600-1000 respectively. However, Cedi's replica of the Chevron bead, using the Venetian technique, is slightly cheaper and costs from GHC400-800 per strand. The costliness is due to the meticulous processes involved in its creation but also (and perhaps more importantly) the historical notoriety of slave bartering that surrounds it. Some beaded necklaces are priced at GHC4, GHC6, GHC10 and GHC20 per strand depending on the technique used in producing the beads. For instance, the recycled antique bead necklaces are priced at GHC20, the recycled powdered glass beads necklaces cost GHC6 and the beaded clay bowls cost GHC5 .

In addition to the beaded jewellery, the company sells bead-embellished handicrafts such as bowls, table lamps, candle holders and traditional earthenware. With the exception of the Chevron bead(s) and other antique bead replicas, the majority of beads sold at Cedi Factory costs less than those purchased at the Arts Centre, but can cost the same or be cheaper than those sold in the Koforidua market depending on whether items are purchased at retail or wholesale price. This is because Cedi Factory has display prices and wholesale prices, whereby display prices are sold at retail costs, while the wholesale prices reflect discounted factory prices. This pricing has significant implication for the flow of the bead trade in Southern Ghana. Although it has already

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<sup>30</sup> See [Thebeadchest.com](http://Thebeadchest.com)



Figure 7.6 Display of beaded jewellery at Cedi Factory  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

been ascertained that Koforidua traders purchase their beads from Odumasi-Krobo, and from Cedi, it was not clear just to what extent these purchases were being made or how many traders were making them. When comparing the prices of beads sold at Koforidua Market to those sold at Cedi Factory, one would assume that Koforidua traders would be making a loss or selling at a loss if purchasing all their items from Cedi Factory. For example most Ghana made glass beads are (according to traders) sold at Koforidua market for approximately GHC5. Traders further explained that they purchased these beads for half the price that they were selling them at, which would mean that these beads had been purchased for GHC2.50 . This further supports the assumption that Koforidua traders are using informal businesses in the rural areas of Odumasi-Krobo and Koforidua as their 'main' suppliers and that Cedi's main connection with the market sellers would be the occasional purchases (as stated below). The company's customer base is made up of two kinds of consumers; tourists and traders. Both the traders and the tourists consist of foreign and local buyers and visitors. Most of the foreign traders originate from the USA and Ghana (Ghanaian exporters are also categorized by Mr. Cedi as 'foreign exporters' as they usually reside overseas or are foreign nationals who

sell these beads in their stores abroad). The tourists include domestic buyers, African Americans, Caucasian Americans and Europeans. International traders who specialize in bead procurements and exports make up roughly 30% of Cedi Factory's customer base, but are responsible for 60% of his sales. They spend (on average) about GHC1000-2000 worth of beads per customer, which they send back to their home countries for resale.

The local buyers consist of sellers from the Koforidua Market, the Arts Centre and customers who own their own jewellery businesses. These merchants usually purchase beads for redesign before sale. This local market forms the remaining 70% his customer base but accounts for just 40% of his sales. These traders purchase GHC50-GHC250 worth of glass beads per week, which is evidently lower than the average foreign exporter. A 25% discount is given on most bead purchases of 10 strands or more. A 'recycled glass beads' necklace which usually costs GHC20 per strand, can be purchased for just GHC15 in bought in bulk; thus saving the trader GHC5 per strand and GHC50 for every 10 necklaces purchased.

Wednesdays and the weekends are the most common days for bulk procurements, and it is during these periods that local traders either make orders or buy what is available. This is partially because of the Thursday bead market days that Koforidua traders are known for. The frequency of these buyers to Cedi Factory is partially influenced by the size of their purchases and their need for restocking. According to Mr. Cedi, local traders who visit the factory every week consist of those who procure items worth GHC 50 or less (the lower end of the purchasing prices) while those who buy products worth GHC200 or more make less frequent trips of every three weeks.

As mentioned, the international tourist market makes up the larger portion of the company's sales. However, determining which nationalities made up which percentages was not possible because Cedi did not calculate such statistics. Mr. Cedi did mention that the African American tourist market in particular is a key source of income for the company and that when they do make purchases, they make it in large quantities. This characteristic was also observed by traders in the other craft centres. Mr. Cedi explained

that when it came to Diaspora patronage, seasonality was an important factor in the company's profit margins because the availability of African American customers was strongly influenced by the seasons, which would often shift between 'good' and 'bad', especially during the months that immediately precede and follow the Emancipation festival period.

According to Cedi;

*"At times you get buses full of loads of people, sometimes hundreds. Other times nothing Most of them buy our products because of their beauty and quality. Even those who did not have any idea about beads and did not originally have the intention to buy change their minds and buy after passing through our display".*

When asked what made his beads particularly attractive to the Diaspora tourist, Cedi explained;

*"All of the beads are popular because of how I know people's taste. So whatever I produce, people want them, especially the AA tourists who visit Ghana and tour my factory".*

*"They {African Americans} heavily patronize multi-coloured beads. They are the most popular. Assorted bracelets are the buyers favourite because of its affordable price and most importantly its readiness to be used, its simplicity and its natural tendency to be mixed with any sort of dress".*

Cedi on a whole has played an important role in marketing Ghana-made beads globally and increasing awareness of the country's role in bead production. Cedi's international popularity means that the tourism industry in Ghana is benefiting through the popularity of the bead trade especially through Cedi Beads Industry. By purchasing beads at the factory, tourist expenditure pays the wages of his employees, helping them to sustain their livelihoods and also goes towards the purchase or use of local materials such as sticks, reeds and clay sourced from the surrounding environment, to local artisans such as metal welders who construct the mortar and pestle and the local kiln makers. Though the use of imported equipment in the company does imply some leakage, the majority of

procurements *do* come from local sources. At a more vulnerable level tourist expenditure also filters through to the nomadic Gao glass merchants.

#### **7.4.4 Informal Small Scale Businesses in Odumasi-Krobo**

According to craft traders at the Koforidua market, Odumasi-Krobo also possesses quite an undisclosed number of small scale unregistered businesses that are run by individuals who inherited the tradition of bead making from their ancestors. These one man businesses or individual enterprises are not officially registered as businesses (through the registrar generals department) and are run by locals.

Some of the owners of these businesses are sales men who originate from Mali and are locally referred to as Zamarmara traders (Interview with C. Agyeman; Arts Centre trader, February 2012). The Zamarmara are not bead producers, but are bead sellers who acquire these beads from the hinterlands or deep in the rural villages at the request of sellers in craft markets (Interview with Regina Sarpomaa February-March 2012). Several benefits make this type of business attractive; the fact that the business can be run from the home and the sales also made from home, the avoidance of stall renting fees and taxes that would have been paid to the local assembly had it been officially recognized base. It is difficult to estimate the number of unregistered businesses that exist in Odumasi-Krobo or in Koforidua for that matter.

However, traders questioned about this suggested that there may be over one hundred informal sellers in and around the Odumasi-Krobo area. At the time of the research there was no officially documented statistics available on this, because, as mentioned before, most of these businesses are not registered. The fact that the owners of one man businesses only become conspicuous during Thursday market days at the Koforidua market or the Agormanya market made finding them even more of a challenge. It was only through a snowballing approach from craft sellers in the Koforidua market that Emmanuel Kpodo was discovered. Below is a summary of the interview conducted with him at the market.

#### **7.4.5 Emmanuel Kpodo; Case Study of a ‘One-Man Business’**

Mr. Kpodo’s business is an unregistered and private bead manufacturing business that he runs from his home in Odumasi-Krobo. The business is essentially a family-run enterprise that depends on family labour. His family is considered ‘helpers’ in the business and not employees, and as such are not paid any salaries. This includes Emmanuel’s son, who does not plan on continuing his secondary school education, but instead intends to use the period to help his family with the business. Emmanuel explained that he had great expectations of his son, who he believed would eventually take over the business. This origin of this business as well as the origins of Cedi factory show that Krobo bead traders and manufacturers seldom adopt the bead manufacturing trade based on curiosity or indifference but usually inherit these traits through family relationships and the passing down of traditions and cultures (Francis, 1994). The business has been in existence for over two decades. The business, which was started 20 years ago, was passed down to Emmanuel from his father when he died ten years ago. Emmanuel learnt the necessary skills required to set up the business as well as in manufacturing beads. In terms of bead production, nearly all of the beads produced by Emmanuel and his family (95%) are glass beads.

The beads are made using the traditional glass-crushing technique of bead production. On a few occasions, Emmanuel branches into modern *Bodom* bead production. This, he explains, is a specialized, expensive and difficult method of bead production, and he only uses this method for special orders and commissions. Bodom literally means ‘Dog’ in local Ghanaian language and describes the size and shape of the bead, which is distinctly larger than most beads on the market and more similar to the Malian Clay beads. The Bodom was used a status symbol in traditional Ghanaian society and due to its size, was usually worn in the middle of a strand of beads as a pendant. Traditional Bodom beads are a rarity in the market and are usually purchased from families that have had these trade beads in their possession through the years (Interview with Ibrahim Mohammed March 2012). While a single antique Bodom bead/bauble can cost £15, a full strand of 10-12 beads is priced at £150. Bodom replicas usually cost just £10 or

more per strand. This may not seem much to the average tourist, but to the trader it is a significant amount which is the equivalent of GHC30 or approximately one-tenth of the average monthly salary of some civil servants (GHC300). So in essence, the sale of a strand of manufactured Bodom beads is equivalent to three days worth of work for the average trader. These bottles can be sold partially broken or intact and come in a variety of shapes, colours and sizes. For example a sack of beer bottles provide hues of green and brown, a sack of soda bottles provide hues of white, green and sometimes yellow, while window louvre glass sacks can provide clear, yellow and brown variations of colour. Louvre glass is a unique material in that they are imported from China, and as a result, any payment made for louvre glass also fuel imports. According to Kankam-Dwumfour (2009:3) “80% of all locally produced glass beads are made from recycled glass obtained from the breweries, while 20% is obtained from louvre blades”. Thus through this channel tourist demand, through bead production also fuels further Chinese imports of the glass product.

All of the beads produced at Emmanuel’s business are transported to the Koforidua market for sale on Thursdays. The bulk of these products are sold to other retailers in the market who redesign the beads for resale, while the remainder is sold to customers, a lot of them tourists. According to Emmanuel, other informal bead manufacturers choose not to display their items in the market but sell directly to the Koforidua retailer from their homes but for him selling at the market was the most effective sales strategy. In addition to the tourist market and the other sellers who may buy from him, Emmanuelle also has three regular buyers that he sells to. These sellers have been purchasing from him for almost a year and contact him through phone calls to commission the production of certain kinds of beads. These retailers usually purchase between GHC50-100 worth of beaded jewellery per order. In terms of sales figures, during high season sales, Emmanuel sells GHC300 worth of beads every week. On average, however, he sells around GHC200-250 per week (which is the equivalent to as much as two to four orders per week). The ability to negotiate prices on a whim and the ability to create and grow seller - seller relationships at the Koforidua market) is an advantage to using one man businesses as a source for procurement. The informal nature of Emmanuel’s business

allows him to control and monitor the intensity and speed of production as well as giving him the freedom to price his products. There are no fixed prices for Emmanuel's beads, and as a result of this, the purchasing prices for his clients are usually determined by the degree of demand for that particular product, by his production costs and any other added costs (for example transportation) that he decides to include, and as a result of the reduction in overheads, one - man businesses can afford to compete with larger markets. Their popularity with Koforidua traders and relative affordability has meant that these businesses have become vital to the bead production and supply network, and without them traders would have to rely solely on less affordable alternatives.

In terms of supplying to Koforidua traders, one-man businesses like Emmanuelle does tend to be the preferred supplier in Odumasi-Krobo. In spite of Cedi factory's size and popularity, Koforidua traders commission the majority of their bead supplies from these homemade informal enterprises. The comparative affordability and accessibility of goods, and the opportunity to develop informal relationships that ultimately enrich the business relationship, contribute to the benefits of using these businesses. This does not imply that the supplier-buyer relationships do not exist between Cedi factory and its local customers; however, the informal and relaxed nature of the one - man business adds elements of creative freedom, temporal freedom and discretion that many designers hold in high esteem. So in this case tourist demand and expenditure does filter through to village level and has a positive effect on the livelihoods of home grown small scale businesses. One-man businesses are not only run by single individuals (as their name implies), but comprises family members or household members that help with bead production.

#### **7.4.6 Koforidua Beads and Craft Market**

The Koforidua bead market (Figures 7.7 and 7.8) is a large bead market situated at Jackson Park in the New Juabeng District in the Eastern Region. The bead market has actually existed for over two centuries. With the advent of the slave trade and the resultant patronage of the beads trade/market, trade routes were created along key areas



of West Africa (such as Mali and Senegal), already mapping out a space for the distribution and consumption of beaded crafts. Traders from these areas flocked to Koforidua in Ghana to participate in this phenomenon, where Krobo bead makers plied their trade. The market is said to be around 60 years old, but the market as it exists today was said to have been developed just 20 years ago (OSEC, 2009). At full capacity, the market can accommodate around 200 traders from far and wide on Thursdays, and is usually vacant on any other days, with the exception of a few traders who still operate on non-market days. Sellers converge at the market from various towns within the districts of Yilo and Manya (Akpabli, 2012).

This means that the Krobo who are farmers, engage in bead selling as a part time business and then concentrate on farming activities or selling their products (beads or farm produce) on other days of the week as a way of maintaining a livelihood (Interview with Ibrahim Mohammed; Koforidua trader, March 2012). The majority of queries with traders at the market were based on informal discussions as recorded interviews were difficult to conduct since most traders were extremely busy during market days and almost non-existent during non-market days. Also traders at the Arts Centre cautioned me that I might find it difficult to obtain any sensitive information from bead manufacturers in Koforidua about bead production. This, according to traders, was the result of an incident that occurred in 2000 when a group of Caucasian tourists and African Americans had tried to imitate the process of bead production by bringing in bead making machines to set up a factory in Koforidua Town (Interview, Mr. C. Osei-Yaw and Abubakari Suleiman, February 12<sup>th</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup> 2012). According to the traders, the incident was common knowledge amongst many craft sellers in Accra and neighboring areas. For example Mr. Abubakari, who is new to the craft business, found out about the incident from his father. The idea was to commercialize bead production by mass producing them with machinery, rather than resort to the tedious handmade production methods. Machine production would produce thousands of beads daily compared to the smaller number of handmade beads that could be produced. According to Mr. C. Osei-Yaw, the realization that such a venture would eventually ruin their businesses (undercutting hand-made bead sellers) resulted in the

local bead manufacturers refusing to cooperate with the visitors;

*“The local traders would not show them how they manufactured the beads; they would not give away their skills! And the Association of Bead Makers prevented their own (craftsmen, workers, labourers etc) from dealing with them”*

(Interview with C. Osei-Yaw; trader, March 2012)

With no employees and no cooperation, the foreign entrepreneurs were forced to leave the centres, and ever since traders have remained skeptical about researchers or visitors as well as buyers and other sellers who they suspect will replicate their bead designs (Interview with Mr. C. Osei-Yaw, February 12<sup>th</sup> 2012). The traders at this point also made brief mention of the Chinese as customers that they also did not trust. But the concern with the Chinese presence is an important issue which is discussed in more detail in later chapters. However these instances of foreign infiltration in the local bead market made traders protective of their businesses and thus about identifying specific individuals in their bead procurement channels.

The wounds of these encounters were still evident in the evasiveness of the responses given when traders were questioned about bead procurement channels. Koforidua traders were just as ambiguous as the Arts Centre traders had been. Responses such as *“bead makers in the villages in the Krobo Region”*, *“Somanya Odumasi”<sup>31</sup>*, *“Odumasi-Krobo”* or *‘from the villages’* were often given. They explained that they were adamant about protecting their sources<sup>32</sup> and that the informal nature of a number of small bead making businesses meant that many of them did not have company names and it would have been impossible for traders to identify them in this way. Traders did add however that a lot of bead makers in the Odumasi-Krobo region travel to Koforidua market to sell their beads to them and that they in turn travel to their production centres to purchase at intervals prior to the crucial market days. The market was a particularly convenient area

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<sup>31</sup> Odumasi-Krobo and Somanya are normally used interchangeably as destinations by traders and locals, as unclear demarcations of boundaries between the Manya-Krobo and Yilo-Krobo districts (Ghana Districts, 2006) often causes some confusion with regards to where traders actually go to procure their stock. For instance, during interviews and informal discussions with traders at Koforidua, some would mention travelling either to Somanya or to Odumasi-Krobo to buy their beads. However on seeking clarifications on the differences between the two locations, traders would explain that they were the same.

<sup>32</sup> The specific reasons for this will be highlighted in the following chapters



Figure 7.7 Koforidua beads market, A.K.A Beads and Crafts Market, New Juaben  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)



Figure 7.8 View of a section of the beads market  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)



Figure 7.9 Crate of empty Schweppes bottles to be used in bead production  
Source; Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)



Figure 7.10 Window louvres and bottles  
Source: Researcher's Personal Collection (December, 2012)

of trade because it provided not only a large range of beads for purchase but also the opportunity for the purchase of raw material such as glass bottles, soda bottles, wine bottles, medicinal bottles, window pane glass, powdered glass, crushed glass and also coloured powder used in bead production (Figures 7.9 and 7.10). The popularity of the bead market is both local and international and merchants and tourists come from all over the country and beyond to purchase beads. During an interview with Mr. Abubakari Suleiman, a wholesale and retail trader at the Koforidua market, he explained that African American tourists, Chinese and Europeans (which are just amongst the few

nationalities) visit the market on Thursdays to purchase beads at competitive prices. When asked what made Ghana such a tourist draw for beads, An African American tourist and bead merchant Mr. H Ali explained that Ghana beads were the most well known in West Africa and possibly Africa and that the country had taken over the beads trade market. Mr. Ali praised the ‘open’ nature of the bead trade in Koforidua and the vibrancy of the Thursday markets which had been going on for over a century.

However, certain constraints to hawking were identified;

*“I work here from Wednesday to Sunday every week. Thursday is market day and a big day, so I am here. On Mondays and Tuesdays, I take my goods on hawking to other parts of the country especially to Nkawkaw, when business is slow here....I go to Nkawkaw, Abetifi, Mpraeso which are near each other in the other side of the Eastern Region..”*

(Interview, Mr. Suleiman, Koforidua trader, March 2012)

Hawking Licenses are required in order to sell beads at most markets, which according to Mr. Suleiman makes conducting business very expensive. The General Secretary of the Beads and Crafts Market Association, Mr. Mohammed, was also interviewed at the Koforidua Market, where he explained that these licenses (which differ from trade tax) can be bought from the various markets on a daily basis for GHC5. Some stall owners have leased stalls on a monthly basis from the New Juaben municipal Assembly for a cost of GHC210, and in turn lease them to hawkers who wish to use their space or part of their stall to sell their items; also at a cost of GHC5. Mohammed did stress that these prices often varied, depending on the size of the stall and the amount of space required by the hawkers.

#### **7.4.6.1 Variety of Beads Sold at the Beads Market**

The sheer range and variety of beads sold at the Koforidua market is both breathtaking and often overwhelming. Beads sold range from the European trade beads to the more common glass beads and mixed beads range. Beads utilizing raw and natural materials such as bone, cowry and shells also feature prominently, but more commonly as part of

a design mix of a strand. Bauxite beads, Malian clay beads, fish vertebrae beads, Bodom beads, Kofi beads and lost wax bronze beads are other varieties available. European trade beads available at the market include white beads, Bota, Eye, Fancy, King, Millefiori, Efa ni Fa and Kofoya (Sutherland-Addy, Aidoo and Dagadu, 2008). At first glance, it is often difficult to distinguish authentic beads from imitations, and only a specialist in bead manufacturing and detection can identify the authentic kind. This process of detection is imbedded in a local idiom which says “*Ahenepa nkasa*” (good beads don’t speak or make any noise). This simply refers to the sound that beads make when struck against one another or against a hard surface. Bead specialists claim that the dullness of a sound made by striking beads against one another indicates the ‘realness’ of the bead in question. In essence, the louder the sound made, the less authentic the bead. However there are several variations to this theory, as some bead specialists interviewed in the market indicated that detection methods involve an analysis of sound, shape, structure, grain and texture and that only a true ‘beadologist’ could detect a forgery. African American tourists have a particular curiosity for this idiom and are often observed testing out the theory by striking beads together.

#### **7.4.6.2 The Cost of Purchasing Jewellery Beads at Koforidua Market**

Trade beads, which are a favourite of African Americans, are sold at the market for approximately GHC20-60 per strand, whilst locally made glass beads are priced at GHC5 per strand. A strand of beads from Kenya are also priced around GHC5, Coconut Shell beaded jewellery are cheaper at GHC3.50, whilst Chinese imported glass beads are sold at GHC2-10 per strand.

#### **7.4.7 Bead Production and local Mothers**

Koforidua market has an interesting mix of bead sellers and manufacturers that take on numerous roles and are from various organizations. One of these is the Krobodan Beads Initiative. This organization is discussed in more detail here because they have particular significance when it comes to sustaining vulnerable livelihoods, in this case local

mothers, women in general and young teens. But the presence of such an organization reflects the revitalization of the bead industry in Ghana as well as in West Africa, which has not gone unnoticed. Though local and international organizations have viewed it as an industry worthy of support (Sutherland-Addy *et al.*, 2008), Acquah (2013) commented on how this has not been the case recently and that much more work was needed to improve the crafts sector in Ghana to help generate more revenue for the tourism industry. In addition to Diaspora purchases, the livelihoods of bead traders are being enhanced and sustained by these organizations. The advancement of the bead culture and business in Ghana are mainly funded by individuals, NGO's and private organizations such as these. But unfortunately there is limited local government involvement in the bead sector;

*“We do not have any data on beads trade in the tourism industry in Ghana. We know it plays a good role and impacts well on our tourism but unfortunately no data. I am the senior researcher and I can say for sure that we do not have any such data. But I think we will have to think about doing that”.*

(Interview, W. Kuvor, Senior Researcher, Ghana Tourist Authority, April 2012)

However, as explained by Mr. Kuvor, the GTA's role at the time was focused on the upcoming PANAFEST and Emancipation ceremonies and its associated activities. This statement seemed to contradict one of the main objectives of PANAFEST and Emancipation, which seeks to promote the 'culture' of the country as well as its history, as many of the chieftaincy processions involve the display of traditional regalia and adornments such as jewellery beads

Nonetheless, these organizations are pioneering the advancement of the Ghanaian bead culture. The General Secretary of the Krobo Danish Association and the Director of Krobodan Beads Limited (KBL), Mr. Joshua Nyumah, explained that the NGO specialized in looking after single mothers in Kroboland. This was because single mothers are considered the most vulnerable members of the Yilo Krobo District society, hence the need to empower them through bead production and sales;

*“We decided that the best way to help these women was through bead making and so we employed them to make glass beads to a specification which we export straight to Denmark to a company called Bulow Glass”*

(Interview, Mr. Joshua Nyumah, KBL, March 2012)

At the time of research, Krobodan Beads Limited employed 34 women (Interview, Mr. Nyumah, KBL, February 2012), but now the organization believes that its female employees are as high as 200 (Krobodan, 2012). The women are now receiving four or five times more than the normal wages (Krobodan, 2012). Mr Nyumah explained that these wages have enabled the women to educate their children and improve their livelihoods overall. But in spite of these benefits, production of beads in this company does leave the country. This is due to the specific agreements made with Bulow Glass (a glass making company that is owned by Pernille Bulow, a Scandinavian glass maker and designer) that ensures that the company purchases all the beads exported to them. So as a result Krobodan Beads exports 95% of its beads to Bulow Glass and sells the remaining 5% at the Koforidua market. Although KBL’s initial target group were single mothers, women in general and young teens, KBL is currently running several projects that are targeted towards landless farmers (Krobodan, 2012). Hence the patronage of beads by African Americans as well as other tourists is vital for keeping these vulnerable manufacturers and prospective traders in business. It is the lucrative nature of the bead trade (which is fueled by purchases) that has encouraged companies and organizations like Krobodan Beads and DANIDA to set up initiatives and associations and to maintain them.

#### **7.4.8 Aid to Artisans Ghana (ATAG)**

Another organization which is worth mentioning briefly is Aid to Artisans Ghana (ATAG), which is an NGO that for almost two decades has worked with bead making communities to ensure that the bead makers develop their skills. ATAG is also a supporting member of Krobodan Beads.

#### **7.4.9 The European Commission and the International Beads Festival**

The European Commission (EC) has also supported the progression of beads through grants and initiatives. For example, the Ghana International Beads Festival, under the theme ‘Tourism and Handicrafts: keys to economic growth’, was launched in July 2009. The objective of this festival was to make the bead culture a national event. It was launched in Odumasi-Krobo in the hopes of boosting tourist numbers to the area.

So as the largest bead market in the country as well as in West Africa, Koforidua Crafts Market is a crucial player in the region and the trader beneficiary network. As a bead supplying and design centre, it is a key vantage point that connects the African American customer to their product through supplying the Arts Centre trader with the variety of beads required. Arts centre traders are highly dependent on them for their beaded jewellery supplies, more so than other informal manufacturers on the periphery of the beneficiary chain or local importers.

#### **7.5 Internationally Sourced Beads: Kenya, India, Nigeria, Mauritania, Mali, China and Senegal)**

During interviews with Arts Centre traders and Koforidua traders, they regularly mentioned that although the majority of beads they sold (at least 75%) were locally sourced, about a quarter originated from other African countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal, as well as from China and India. This is not a definitive list as beads may well have originated from more Africa countries; however traders were only certain about the specific countries mentioned. These international merchants have chosen Ghana to sell their wares because of the popularity the country has garnered from its slave trade heritage and its connection to trade beads. West Africa is in turn famously known as the centre for powder glass production of beads with Mauritania, Nigeria and Ghana being the most popular (OSEC, 2009). However, other countries beyond Africa such as China and India also manufacture powdered glass beads.

International merchants from these regions exist in two forms; the established business



merchant and the nomadic trader. Whilst the established merchants are considered registered business men who have established businesses in their home countries, nomadic traders such as Zamarmara men are considered unregistered informal traders who roam the region finding the best wholesale markets to sell their wares. Merchants from Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania (rare) and China travel to the Koforidua market to sell their beads to market traders who in turn sell them to other customers which often include traders from the Arts Centre. Jewellery items, especially those made with rare raw materials, are usually sourced from Kenya. For instance according to one jewellery seller, her Bone Necklaces and Cow horn Necklaces as well as some bead necklaces are originally from Kenya. The reason that these specific kinds of jewellery are imported and sought after by traders is that Cow horns and Bones, if and when used as jewellery in Ghana, are usually reserved for supernatural activities related to Witch Doctors (Juju Men) or conjuring the ancestors, and as a result are not commercialized. Jewellery made from rare materials is quite popular amongst African American as well as European tourists who seek originality, uniqueness and authenticity. But a considerable portion of internationally sourced beads are also imported from locals themselves.

#### **7.5.1 Bead Imports, Duties and Policy; Regulated Imports, Semi-Regulated Imports and Key Import Markets**

The jewellery industry in Ghana is said to consist mainly of imported items (OSEC, 2009). Domestically made fine jewellery is said to account for almost 20% of national jewellery sales, while the imported commercialized custom jewellery account for a majority (80%) of these sales (OSEC, 2009). This is not uncommon in the craft sector as the handicraft sector in the Dominican Republic is reportedly said to have over 80% of its souvenirs being imported (WTO, 2008). Official documentation of bead imports and exports in Ghana, however, began in 2005. There are two main kind of imports; regulated importing and semi-regulated importing. The regulated imports comprise official government policies that control and standardize the amount of tax to be paid on importing any jewellery or crafts. The current rates stand at 0%, 5%, 10% and 20%.

Current import rates for jewellery beads, which is categorized under ‘Glass and Glassware; glass beads, imitation precious or semi-precious stones’ is 20% (WTO, 2012). Information on official bead imports from the Ghana Customs and Excise Preventive Service (CEPS) indicated that in seven years, from 2005-2012, Ghana gained over GHC1,700, 000 (or around £600, 000)<sup>33</sup> in tax revenue. While data from craft traders show that Chinese imports play an important role in the commodity chain, documented bead imports show just how strong the Chinese market is when it comes to bead imports. China has dominated the bead import market and has featured prominently throughout the years (63%, or 419 out of the 641 jewellery imports from 2005-2012 are from China) with glass beads being the most popular type of beads imported into the country. An excerpt of bead imports from 2009-2012 is available in the Appendix 2. These beads have also accounted for some of the largest bulk of the imports, with some imports weighing as much as 23,000 Kilograms (479 cartoons), and amounting to over GHC97,000 (a little over £34,000) in CIF duty. Other varieties of beads include loose beads, plastic loose beads, rosary beads, hair beads, imitation glass beads and foreign jewellery.

In order to avoid paying extra levies, bead traders (like fabric traders) are constantly trying to find loopholes and as a result resort to smuggling beads into the country. These strategies have materialized as the semi-regulated importation of beads. These semi-regulated (and sometimes unregulated) imports usually involve bringing jewellery into Ghana on a smaller scale across ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) borders or through airport immigration. Information gathered from several bead traders at the Arts Centre and Koforidua, and the ECOWAS trade liberalization scheme show that traditional handicraft products are exempt from import duties, taxes and any quantitative restrictions (ETLS, 2012) when transported amongst the member states. Transporting jewellery in flight baggage often involves the strategy of concealing small pieces of valuable jewellery in one’s luggage or wearing several pieces of priceless antique trade beads and citing them as personal jewellery. The commercial viability of transporting such small quantities of beads in any single travel session can be brought

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<sup>33</sup> Using the 2012 exchange rate

into question, as many repeat visits would be required to meet an agreeable quota; however the cost of some of the trade beads imported (minus the cost of duty) is considered value for money (Interview, anonymous trader, February 6<sup>th</sup> 2012). Personal jewellery of two or three pieces is usually allowed through customs, while excess amounts must be declared. Informal imports are on the increase as the country continues to charge what Azzure (2009:69) refers to as “restrictive” import duty on a number of products, with these duties sometimes amounting to as much as 100% of the value of the product. For example, the import duty on a piece of wax print fabric is charged at \$13.05, which is almost the same price as the fabric itself while other ECOWAS countries such as Togo charge only 15% (Azzure, 2009).

### **7.5.2 West African Traders and the Modern Day Barter Trade in Beads**

Interviews in the market found that the barter trade has become the current method of selling beads amongst the Malian and Senegalese traders in Ghana. This involved the non-monetary purchasing of beads for another type of bead through direct exchange. A few traders mentioned that Malian and Senegalese merchants sometimes used to bring Senegalese and Malian beads to the market to trade-in for locally made beads which would then be returned to their home countries for resale. However, (according to traders at the Arts Centre), this practice is gradually on the decline amongst other Africans. On the other hand, more locals are adopting the bartering trade. Thus, bead-bartering is no longer the forte of Senegalese and Malian traders, but a growing number of Ghanaian traders travel to countries like Mauritania to ‘barter’ for their rare Kiffa beads with modern Bodom beads, which can then be resold or re-bartered for back home (Interview, Ibrahim Mohammed, March 2012). Interviews with traders showed that the barter trade with the market involves three countries; Mali, Senegal and Mauritania; which is unsurprising due to their proximity to each other. Traders were unsure as to whether other African traders participated in this process, but could only verify the encounters that they had.

A discussion with one of the Malian merchants revealed that the barter trade was an

informal and often tedious means of conducting business. On recounting his experience with bartering, a trader explained that his commissioned quantity of beads had been delayed and had caused him to remain in the country for two weeks, waiting for the beads to be produced. This waiting period was found to be quite common in the barter trade. Other barterers such as Mr. Cisse explained that he travels to Ghana several times a year to exchange sought after Senegalese ‘Gamatoro’ beads for locally valuable ‘Gashi’ beads made by the Krobo people. The beads he transports from Senegal are packaged in sachets and weigh approximately half a kilo or a Kilo and are sold to Koforidua clients who reassemble and redesign them to specifications. The Senegalese beads are exchanged for Gashi beads of the same weight. The Gashi beads have significant value in Dakar. According to the seller, cash exchanges are rare and the barter method of ‘beads for beads’ has been in place for many generations. Like the Malian trader, the problem of waiting was also highlighted by a Senegalese trader;

*“During the lean (off peak) season, like the current season, I have been in Ghana for two weeks without getting my goods although I have handed over my own. They (Krobo bead makers) have asked me to wait, so I am waiting”*

(Interview, Abdul Cisse, Senegalese trader, March, 2012).

While Cisse barterers in Ghana, this process ceases when he is back in Senegal as a sack full of *Gashi* beads (fired powdered glass beads) will normally sell for approximately 571,000 CFA Franc or GHC2000. Thus tourist demand in this case also goes beyond Ghana and fuels the barter trade amongst other Western African countries.

### **7.5.3 The Chinese Merchant in Koforidua Market: Bead Design Duplication and Illegal Procurements.**

As well as having a large presence in the general goods import market in the country (Tsikata, Fenny and Aryeetey, 2008) the Chinese market has a significant presence in the handicraft industry as well. But this presence has been met with much controversy. According to traders interviewed at Koforidua market, Chinese merchants who come to the region to buy market beads end up sending them back home to re-sell and to thus

gain competitive advantage through product imitation. Traders complained that Chinese traders in particular visit the craft centres to purchase handicrafts with the hidden objective of copying their skills, reproducing these in the overseas Chinese market and possibly selling them on to other countries. Traders thus felt that their products were being jeopardized by these merchants who had a habit of copying their designs. Traders explained that they were often skeptical about any Chinese tourists or visitors that were interested in purchasing their beaded items. This skepticism meant that traders would often hide certain types of beads (due to their unique pattern or newness to the market) and only display these items to specific customers who requested something new.

This knowledge (or suspicion) has caused traders to mistrust and dislike Chinese customers, and consequently become wary in selling their products to them. For instance, during a visit to the Arts Centre in early March 2012, it was observed that the market was flooded with Chinese visitors, with little European or African American tourists<sup>34</sup>. This was a common observation over a period of two weeks. During informal discussions with several traders, they explained that the constant ‘stealing of their designs’ by the Chinese visitors (who were also believed to be businessmen in disguise) was ruining their business. When asked to elaborate on how their businesses were being ruined, respondents explained that they often saw that many of their designs were visible in the imported Chinese beads that they had seen circulating in the market and from merchants that had brought bulk supplies to them to purchase. But the most mentioned reason was that the Chinese had a reputation for the imitation of goods on the global market and so they assumed that the bead designing industry was just another area that they could monopolize;

*“The Chinese are bad, they only practice the art of imitation; TV’s, bags, clothes, and radio, anything that you buy is made by the Chinese, so we are scared...”*

(Interview, A. Akomea, seller at Koforidua Market, February 2012)

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<sup>34</sup> The absence of African American was due to the period in which interviews took place-February, which although is African history month in North America, does not translate into large tourist numbers for Ghana.

*“The Chinese have stolen some of our skills already, that is why they are able to produce thousands of Glass Beads from China, flooding our markets, making the products cheap, but we will guard the other ones like the Antique Beads seriously, so that they don’t cheapen that as well!”*

(Interview, Mr. Abubakari Suleiman, crafts seller at Koforidua Crafts Market, March 2012).

These last words by Mr. Abubakari show the tenacity and overall sentiment of a lot of the traders interviewed with regards to the various threats facing the bead manufacturing business in Ghana. Although traders were able to prevent their skills from being stolen 13 years ago, there is a sense of frustration that they were unable to mitigate the current threats posed by Chinese visitors. The heavily debated (and controversial) topic of the economic relationship between China and Africa and how the Chinese presence on the African continent is another form of colonization (Naidu and Davies, 2006; Alden, 2007; Junbo, 2007; Manji, 2007; Girouard, 2008; Taylor, 2009; Obi and Cheru, 2010) reflects some of the issues experienced by sellers in this case. The influx of Chinese visitors has also made the situation much more difficult to control.

It was also revealed that Chinese visitors, in addition to seeking to replicate bead designs, also visit the centre in a bid to procure Ivory;

*“All the China-people are the people who come in for Ivory”*

(Interview, Kamal, seller at crafts centre)

Ivory is considered very important in the Chinese culture. Traders have often speculated on why Ivory was such a desired product amongst the Chinese. Whilst some sellers believed that their popularity stemmed from their use as a form of dowry in their wedding ceremonies, we know that the Chinese have for centuries valued and used Ivory as a decorative and artistic ornament. According to Martin (2010), who also conducted research in the Arts Centre on Elephant poaching and the illegal Ivory trade, he found (from traders) that the Chinese were the largest buyers of Ivory, followed by the Americans and then the Europeans. Compared to other West African countries, Ghana’s trade in Ivory is much smaller. It is currently illegal to possess Ivory in Ghana

without permission from the Wildlife department. The law was put into place in 2004 as a response to the country's rapid decline in its Elephant population during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Martin, 2010). A growing population, human-animal conflicts and a growing black market for Ivory were responsible for this decline (Martin, 2010).

The Arts Centre has had a lucrative but controversial history of selling Ivory. Prior to 2008, hundreds of pieces of Ivory were available to purchase in the centre, in spite of the fact that legislation was in place that prohibited the unauthorized acquisition and sale of Ivory (Martin, 2010). This ivory was sourced from Northern Ghana (which has a significant Elephant population; Paga) and imported from neighboring West African countries. However due to improvements in the enforcement of poaching laws and raids, the trading of Ivory is almost non-existent. In 2008, the Arts Centre was raided by the authorities in the early hours of the morning. According to Asare (2008) (cited in Martin, 2010), several shop owners and their assistants were arrested for selling Ivory without a license, and had their store items confiscated (Salia, 2008). Substitutes for Ivory (especially when used as jewellery) now consist of cow bones. But the Chinese involvement in the Ivory trade still remains a growing concern amongst government officials and conservationists in the country because since the raid several instances of illegal possession of Ivory have occurred in connection to the Chinese presence in the country (Martin, 2010).

#### **7.5.4 Cost of Purchasing International Beads**

International beads vary in cost depending on their origins, the local 'value' of the bead and any import taxes accrued. Although prices vary depending on the type of material used in making the beaded jewellery, locally produced glass beads are slightly more expensive than the Chinese imports, with Kenyan beads and trade beads being the most expensive (at least GHC10 per jewellery piece). An interview with Mr. Suleiman, as well as other traders in the market helps compile a list of some of the various international beads sold at the market, their names and origins (Table 7.6).

Beads bought from China are usually packed in sachets (usually loose) and cost on average GHC3 per sachet. These beads are then arranged and threaded by the traders

Table 7.6 Types of beads brought by international merchants and their prices\*

Name of bead	Country of origin	Materials used	Price (GHC)
Agget	Nigeria		
Qashi		Cow Bones	
Coffee beads			
Amber beads			
Assisa beads	Togo	Snail shells	
Tracota	Mali	Sahara Sand	50 (per kilo)
White side			
Coffee beads			
Glass beads	China		30 (per kilo)
Kenya beads	Kenya	Bones	
Gamatoro	India		
Bazayara beads	Czech Republic		
Kiffa beads	Mauritania	Glass	

\*as this market is quite informal, these prices represent an average amount and can vary slightly from trader to trader

Table 7.7 Comparing income levels of selected tourism actors in the beneficiary chain

Craft seller(s)	Highest income(s) received per month (peak period)
Arts Centre traders	1500
Elmina/Cape Coast traders	1000
Cedi employee 1	650
Cedi employee 2	450
Krobodan Beads initiative (single mothers)	450
Emmanuelle Kpodo	300

into the desired design or style, either into arm bands, bracelets, necklaces and earrings. After beads are restrung, the new item can cost on average GHC2-10, depending on the type of jewellery created. If a designer decides to use *just* the contents of a sachet for restringing, then only one sachet is required to create a bracelet or an arm band. If a variety of beads from other sources are to be added to the jewellery, then half a sachet (or even less) would suffice. Necklaces can be strung fully (with beads strung around the entire circumference of the thread or wire); which would require 2 or more sachets, or partially strung along a small portion of the string. According to Mr. Suleiman, his



Table 7.8 Vulnerability of craft centres

Craft centre	Vulnerability					
	Not featured prominently on tour operators sampled	geographical disadvantage	Limited variety of craft items amongst sellers	Expensive crafts	Internal competition	External competition
Cape Coast/Elmina traders						
Arts Centre						
Koforidua Craft Market						
Cedi Factory						
One Man Businesses						

restrung arm bands are sold for GHC2-6, necklaces are priced at GHC5-7 and waist beads cost GHC5-10. These prices are relatively the same throughout the Koforidua market. According to Mr. Agyeman, prices would also vary for items which would require additional finishing touches; for instance beads purchased that were considered partially finished or that looked dull and required additional polishing would be relatively cheaper to procure than their more finished versions.

## 7.6 Summary

This chapter has shown that the beneficiary chain in the beaded craft industry is far reaching in terms of the variety of stakeholders involved and their geography. Beads are sourced both locally and internationally, with the majority being sourced from local markets and manufacturing companies such as Koforidua Crafts Market and one-man businesses. These one-man businesses are quite significant in the beneficiary chain as they are the preferred supplier by bead/craft sellers in the Koforidua crafts market. But the beaded craft industry is also international and sources many of its beads from China as well as other sub-Saharan African markets which mean that tourist expenditure in

Ghana is also aiding bead sellers and manufacturers in neighboring African countries. Chinese imports play an important role in the commodity chain as the country has dominated the Ghanaian bead import market, meaning that Diaspora tourist expenditure on glass beads fuels their imports from China causing any profits to go to Chinese businesses. In spite of this, the bead manufacturing business has been found to be a lucrative endeavour. The next section discusses the level of influence that the tour operator has in affecting how the craft centres just discussed get access to tourist expenditure.

## **Chapter 8. Tour Operation in Ghana and the Management of African American Tourists: the Tour Operator Influence on Tourist Expenditure**

### **8.1 Introduction**

Tour companies were asked various questions to elicit some details about how they ‘managed’ their African American tourists. Management in this case referred to the handling of tourists and their experience from the minute they disembark and are received at the airport to their departure and how these processes impact on their expenditure decisions. It was found that tour operators have had, and continue to have, a considerable impact on tourist expenditure flows. The extent and nature of this influence is the main theme of this chapter which is based on interviews conducted with tour operators from Cape Coast and Accra. These provided supporting evidence to confirm the significance of the tour operators as well as revealing insights into their technique of conducting business, management strategies, the influence of human and social capital in the direction and redirection of expenditure and its impacts on handicraft traders. These issues are examined further in this chapter.

To contextualize the tour operator within the study, the study provides a brief account of the tour operation industry within Ghana, its structure and its key characteristics as well as outlining its benefits. The second part concentrates on the extent of trader-tourist interaction during tours, tour operator perspectives on African American spending habits, the tour operators’ level of influence on handicraft purchases and the extent and impact of their recommendations for their clients. The views of tourist and traders relevant to the issues being discussed are also referred to in this Chapter to support or question some of the assertions being made.

The analysis focuses on four main areas: assessing the extent of trader-tourist interactions, assessing the influence of tour operators’ recommendations on the direction of African American tourist expenditure, reviewing the impact of itinerary structure on handicraft purchases and assessing the overall spending habits of tourists from the

perspectives of tour operators and agents.

## **8.2 Tour Operation in Ghana**

Tour operators in Ghana have the same roles and functions as most tour operators around the world. They purchase the various tourism products and elements and combine them into an attractive package for the consumer. They conduct consultations with their clients and assesses their preferences, needs and desires for necessities such as transportation, rentals, accommodation, food and beverage and entertainment, which will then be negotiated and priced accordingly (Interviews, Nayak Holiday Services; Land Tours; Starline; Sagrenti; AG Travels; Sunseekers; Lomo Nainoo; Graceland Travels, July 2009). There is also an international element to their management where some operators have international affiliates that they work with to obtain tourist clientele. For instance Starline stated that they often worked with their tour operator partners in the U.S.A (who are also familiar with Ghana) who would gather necessary information from potential African American tourists regarding their preferred places of visit and activities and relay the information to the company back in Ghana to make the necessary preparations.

Ghana's travel and tour industry consists of around 260 companies dealing mostly in the business of sales and ticketing and, on a smaller scale, tour operation. The travel agencies were the main players in the tourism industry in Ghana for quite some time before tour operators materialized (Interview with Mr. Issaka, GTA, 2007). The southern sector of the country has the majority of travel and tour agencies. One main challenge facing the industry currently is the need to increase the awareness of the country amongst international operators thereby increasing the amount of international operators that offer tours to the country and the improvement of package tours (NTMS, 2009). Other challenges centre around the small number of operators that deal with African American tourists (as mentioned in Chapter 4), the limited number of licensed tour operators in the Central Region; a key tourist region and the large number of operators that deal solely or mainly in ticketing as opposed to tour operations (GTA,

2009). Some tour companies that cater to African American tourists are often owned and run by African Americans themselves. For example, Land tours is owned by an African American now resident in Ghana, Sankofa Meroe tours are an African American company based in Ghana that specialize in catering to tours for African American tourists. These are ways to offer the African American tourists an operator that understands their needs and offers the most comfortable and relatable experience. Many tour operators in Ghana including the ones interviewed are members of associations and unions such as GATTA (Ghana Association of Travel and Tour Operators) and TOUGHGA (Tour Operators Union of Ghana). These bodies strive to ensure the sustainable development and growth of the tourism industry. Though they do not directly engage in activities or operations that impact the livelihood of local traders, they encourage best practices in the business of travel and tour operation and seek to improve the local tourism industry as a whole through the partnerships maintained by their members. For instance according to TOUGHGA, they as a body do not organize activities directly for handicraft traders, but they do indirectly contribute to craft sales through the addition of itineraries that favour trips to craft villages such as Bonwire, Ahwiaa and Ntonso. But the business relationship between craftsmen and tour operators has been a topic of concern amongst these two bodies as well as local government. Their relationship is often estranged because of the disagreements between the quality of trader goods and the desire of tour operators to encourage their clients to purchase them.

This has inspired various attempts to improve the relationship between the tour operator and the craftsmen through a series of workshops and functions. Tour operators have complained about the poor finishing of many handicrafts and their lack of appeal on the local and foreign market. These complaints from tour operators ultimately helped attract funding for the training of the craftsmen in the craft villages. The Rural Enterprise Commission organized series of workshops in the 90's and 2000 to help improve the quality of craft products (TOUGHGA, 2010). But these bodies are not alone in this venture, as organizations such as ATAG (Aid to Artisans Ghana) are helping to develop the craft product and improve the livelihoods of craftsmen in Ghana. They have led the efforts to provide training for local craftsmen through workshops and seminars. But

many of the projects, however, exist to increase export productivity for the national craft industry to shops around the world particularly in North America.

### **8.3 Key Findings**

#### **8.3.1 Number of African American Tourists Booked Annually**

The first question posed to tour operators concerned the number of African American tourists that they received annually or seasonally. This question posed a problem for many of the companies interviewed, however some operators did have this information at hand. Gathering numbers in this case was of some concern as some operators (those who had minimal number of their clients being African American) did not have a physical record of their client's ethnicity but were able to recall or give estimates from their memory. Though this was not the best source of empirical data, it was nonetheless necessary to obtain a general figure. Companies such as Land Tours and Sunseekers were able to provide official and accurate statistics from their records. The most popular tour operators inevitably had the highest numbers of African American tourists bookings on an annual basis. Sunseekers Tours, on average, received the most number of tourists per year, with Nayak receiving the least.

According to Nayak Travel Services, the limited number of African American tourists that his company had received throughout the years (averaging 10 per year) was mainly due to (in his opinion) the popularity of well established tour companies such as Sunseekers and Land tours who had for years been viewed as the industry leaders in the field of tour operation for African Americans and other Diasporas. Numbers ranged from as little as 10 per annum for Nayak travel, 50 per annum for Sankofa Meroe, 150-250 per annum for Starline Travel, 160-500 per annum for One Africa Tours, 600 per annum for Sunseekers Tours and over 1000 for Land Tours (Table 8.1) . According to a 2009 interview with Land Tours, the company stated that they had received a total of 1,280 travelers in 2007 of which over 80% were African American tourists. This would give the company around 1,024 African American clients each year. Based on the

Table 8.1 Number of African American tourists booked annually by selected tour companies

Tour Operator	Number of African American tourists received annually
Land Tours	1000
Sunseekers Tours	600
One Africa Tours	160-500
Starline Travel	150-250
Sankofa Meroe	50
Nayak Travel	10
Total	1,970

estimates gathered from six companies interviewed (the rest were unable to provide estimates), these six companies alone bring in 1,970 African American tourists to Ghana annually (Table 8.1), taking in a 20% share of the estimated 10,000 African American tourists that Mensah (2004) and Mwakikagile (2005) estimated arrived in the country annually. This is a significant amount of the African American tourist market because it excludes tourists that use non-local tour operators or who visit without using the services of tour operators. So these six companies alone expose handicraft traders to at least 1,900 visitors and potential buyers per year; averaging four per day. Tour operators revealed that the Emancipation/PANAFEST festival peak periods from late June – early August provided the highest number of Diaspora tourists and especially African American tourists. It is important to note once again that these numbers do not account for those African American tourists who travel as individuals without the assistance of travel and tour companies. As two of the leading tour operators for African American tourists, Land Tours and Sunseekers as companies alone bring in on average 1600 African American tourists to the country annually (and usually in groups).

### 8.3.2 Tour Price Packages

This question sought to solicit information on how much money African American

Table 8.2 Tour package of Nayak Holiday Services and Travel and Tours

Tailored tour package details	
Price package includes:	Accommodation, car rentals, driver, guide (optional)
Average cost of hotel rooms:	\$120-200 (on average; 3 or 4 star)
Car rental categories:	Standard, luxury, cross-country \$120 (salon car) \$150-180 (4x4)
Driver price considerations:	Within Accra tour (\$20) Outside Accra tour (\$40+ accommodation for driver)
Tourist trail	Akosombo, Kakum National park, Elmina Castle, Arts Centre, Boti falls, Dodi Island

tourists contribute to the tourism industry through the tour package prices each company charges. The variations in tour package prices reflect the size of the business and the ability of the business to command such large prices. Table 8.2 provides a sample of a tour package from Nayak Holiday Services. The prices of tour packages also vary from one company's itinerary to another. Some of the companies could not provide specific prices for their tour packages, as these, according to them, would depend on specific requests made by the tour group prior to their arrival (for e.g. accommodation star rating, type of transportation used, distance travelled, entrance fees etc). Rates are based on group size, time spent in the country, whether they want 5 star or 3 star and the itinerary type (Interviews, Nayak holiday services and Graceland Travels, 2009). For instance a group of 20 people staying for 14 days and travelling to the Northern Region would cost considerably more than 15 people staying for 12 days in the southern sector whilst using budget accommodation. However, according to Graceland, package prices formulated with African Americans prior to their arrival tend to change even after arrival, as tourists tend to alter their programme structure, which then affects pricing. Tour operators are very accommodating when it comes to handling their clients and are generally willing to make the necessary changes to ensure their client's satisfaction. However the prices that were available indicated a range of \$700 - \$2,700 per structured trip. While some operators prefer to charge their clients by the day others use the fixed price method of pricing. One Africa Tours said that they charged their clients on average \$20 per day, but that this amount would fluctuate as the demands or requirements fluctuated (One



Africa Tours). Sankofa Meroe has package prices in the range of \$1250 -\$2280. AG Leisure services also quoted similar prices around \$1600. Land Tours packages range from \$1,500-\$2,700. The Diaspora-themed tours such as the Atonement Pilgrimage tour, the Emancipation Celebration tour, the PANAFEST tour and the Forts and Castles tours are some of the most expensive (Land Tours, 2012).

### **8.3.3 Extent of Trader-Tourist Interactions; Tour Operator Perspectives**

Tour operators were asked to what extent or through which channels, they felt African American tourists come into contact with handicraft traders during their travels. In terms of the extent of interaction, it was found to be a structured opportunity in the sense that not all itinerary days offered a purchasing opportunity, as the majority of tour activities involved moving around in a tour bus. However there was a general consensus amongst all companies interviewed that tourist-trader interaction was inhibited by structured schedules for particular days and affected by where tourists visited.

The African American tourist's level of contact with handicraft traders is affected in two ways;

- a. structure of tour itineraries
- b. style of tour operator recommendations of handicraft sellers

#### **8.3.3.1 The Effects of Tour Itineraries on Handicraft Purchases**

When companies were asked to further explain the strategy underpinning the structure of an itinerary, it was found that tours usually fall within two main categories; tours with structured strict schedules and tours with partly structured schedules. The structure of tour itineraries, whether pre-designed or tailored to the requirements of the tourist all follow a similar pattern and route. Pre-designed itineraries are those that are created based on a theme or idea to attract the customer. The tourist tailored itineraries are created based on the requirements of the tourists prior to their arrival in the country. The companies stated that itinerary structures, prices and tour sites were set up and based on

Table 8.3 Structured tour itineraries from Land Tours

African American Black history month tour	10 day PANAFEST tour
Accra (Dubois Centre, Nkrumah Mausoleum, Arts centre)	Cape Coast Castle
Cape Coast and Elmina (castles)	Elmina Castle
Kakum National Park/ Posuban shrine	Assin Manso
Ashanti Crafts Village (village of handicraft sellers)	Dubois Centre, Nkrumah Mausoleum, Independence Arch
*Free day (Leisure/shopping)	Accra; Arts Centre
	*Day at leisure; Accra

tourist preferences provided to them prior to them arriving in Ghana and that this was the most efficient method of itinerary construction as this would ensure that all requirements were met and that preparations could be made with accommodation, transportation and other business partners. This practice was used by Nayak Holiday Services and Graceland Travel and Tours. All the companies interviewed possessed to some degree itineraries that incorporated both structured and free-range periods. Companies such as Sunseekers Tours and Land Tours Ghana both have structured and themed itineraries that have a structured schedule for the first majority of the itinerary and a more lenient period at the latter end of the schedule (Table 8.3 and 8.4).

Itinerary routes are another factor that affects the level of contact that tourists have with traders (Tables 8.5 and 8.6). The routes combine traditional, cultural and historical elements of the country's history. The geographical pattern of Diaspora-themed tours have been structured to move alongside Ghana's colonial slave history, its Pan-African history and its associated landmarks such as the ever popular Elmina and Cape Coast Castles, the Slave River, Assin Manso and the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum. As a result of their popularity and frequency of tourist visits to these areas, handicraft traders have situated themselves along the heritage route to take full advantage of the incoming Diaspora tourists as well as others interested in Diaspora-themed tours. The contact though is considered minimal because most shopping for handicrafts is done at the latter stages of the tour itinerary and there is a limited time for handicraft purchases during

Table 8.4 Structured tour itineraries from Sunseekers Ghana

Returning to our roots; 8 days and 7 nights tour	Traditional circuit tour ; 6 days and 5 nights
*Accra (Nkrumah Mausoleum, Dubois Centre, Artists Alliance gallery, Independence Arch)	Accra
*Makola Market and Arts Centre (shopping opportunity for handicrafts)	Cape Coast and Elmina castles
Kumasi (culture and tradition) *Ashanti crafts villages; (Ahwiaa-carvings; Ntonso-traditional fabrics and Bonwire-Kente fabric weaving)	Kakum National Park (wildlife; flora and Fauna)
*Assin Manso	Kumasi; cultural centre, palaces and museums, central market Half day at leisure
*Elmina and Cape coast castle	Ashanti crafts villages; (Ahwiaa-carvings; Ntonso-traditional fabrics and Bonwire-Kente fabric weaving)
*Kakum National park	Accra; leisure day (shopping opportunity)
*Accra; Free leisure day (shopping opportunity)	
**Free leisure day (2); shopping opportunity	

\*represents the various places of contact with handicraft traders

\*\*opportunities for contact with handicraft traders

site visits and activities. Instead tour operators explained that most of the contact, however, was centred at the Arts Centre (due to its popularity amongst tourists and domestic visitors) and other craft centres in Accra. Tour operators could not give specific names and locations of these ‘other centre’ but simply stated that they would on occasion stop at a small craft shop by the roadside based on a tourist’s request. The Accra - Cape Coast - Elmina - Accra route ensures that the primary area of introduction; Accra (including its numerous cultural centres) takes the majority of tourist patronage. But by the time tourists are almost through with the journey, the financial and emotional desire to spend is significantly reduced. Tour operators also confirmed that purchasing items from craftsmen near Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle is almost non-existent due to the aggressive selling techniques of some of these traders that often deter any

Table 8.5 Tour circuits most travelled by three tour operators

Name of tour company	Name of tour	Route taken (Left to Right)					
Land tours Ghana Limited	Forts and Castles Tour	<b>Accra</b>	<b>Cape Coast &amp; Elmina</b> Castle	Kakum National Park	Sekondi/Takoradi city tour; Forte Appolonia	Kumasi cultural tour	<b>Accra</b>
	Atonement Tour	<b>Accra</b>	Kumasi cultural tour	Tamale	Salaga (Slave Market)	Tamale	<b>Accra</b>
Sunseekers tours	Return to roots tour	<b>Accra</b>	Kumasi cultural tour	<b>Elmina/ Cape Coast</b> castle	Kakum national park	<b>Accra</b>	<b>Accra</b>
M & J Travel and Tours	Slave routes tour	<b>Accra</b>	<b>Elmina/ Cape Coast</b> castle	Kumasi cultural tour	Gwollu (defense wall)	Salaga (Slave Market)	Tamale Kumasi <b>Accra</b>

purchases (as discussed in Chapter six). Though none of the operators ever admitted to leaving a craft centre because of aggressive selling, they did explain that the complaints received from the tourists was of some concern to them. According to One Africa, although local handicrafts are patronized, aggressive selling techniques by traders are driving most tourists (not just African Americans) away. In their opinion, traders near the castles and dungeons are more aggressive than those in the villages and as a result, tourists are more willing to spend time and money in the rural areas. They also mentioned that the horrors of the dungeon combined the commercialization techniques of the traders tend to defer patronage of items. They suggested that government propose or implement some training for hawkers to improve their level of service and approach. These tour itineraries have in some ways created a bottle neck effect for the handicrafts industry, where by the number of purchases made by tourists decrease as the trail becomes more emotionally intense (in the case of Cape Coast and Elmina) or steers further away from the capital. 'Free days' are another aspect of tour itineraries that are very important in facilitating tourist-trader interactions. These days are set aside to allow

Table 8.6 Most popular tour circuits by tour operators

Tour operator	Most common route taken	Common denominator
Land tours	Accra (Dubois centre, Nkrumah Mausoleum)-Cape Coast, Elmina, Kakum National park	Elmina and Cape Coast
AG travel service	Accra-Kakum-Cape Coast, Elmina- Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Felix Ngua travel and tours	Accra-Cape Coast, Elmina route-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Graceland travel and tours	Accra-Cape Coast and Elmina Castle, Kakum-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Lomo Nainoo	Elmina Castle and Cape Coast castle	Elmina and Cape Coast
Nayak travel and tours	Akosombo, kakum National Park, Elmina Castle, Arts Centre, Boti Falls, Dodi Island	Elmina and Cape Coast
One Africa tours	Accra-Kakum-Cape Coast, Elmina-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Sagrent travel and tours	Accra-Kakum-Cape Coast, Elmina-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Starline travel and tours	Triangular route; Accra, Cape Coast, Kumasi circuit.	Elmina and Cape Coast
Sunseekers tours	Accra-Kakum-Cape Coast, Elmina-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast
Sankofa Meroe	Accra-Kumasi-Cape Coast-Accra	Elmina and Cape Coast

tourists to rest but also to give the tourists some freedom from the structured elements of the tour decide for themselves what their activities will be for the day. African American tourists interviewed from Land Tours and at several craft centres explained that the free days are extra opportunities for them to do some extra shopping (mainly for crafts) and or to go back to craft villages like Ahwiaa or Bonwire or to the Arts Centre to do some last-minute shopping. But others also said that they were usually preparing to return to the USA and that free days gave them an opportunity to relax and to do some last-minute preparations;

*“ we already did a lot of shopping when they took us to the Arts Centre and Koforidua and other places, even to the Cultural Centre in Kumasi, so there isn’t much left to buy after that”*

(Interview, African American tourist, Arts Centre, July 2010)

*“Most of the others [other African American tourists] just stay in the hotel, by the pool maybe, or under the hut. It’s nice to just relax after all that”*

(Interview, African American tourist, Koforidua Craft Market, February 2010)

*“If we wanted, we could go to the mask sellers by the road side, there are a lot to choose from these days, or the decorated pot sellers; plant pots, they’re quite nice as well...”*

(Interview, African American tourist, Arts Centre, May 2012)

When asked which places they would *prefer* to revisit on a free day, most respondents mentioned that the Arts Centre is the closest and the most sensible place to do some extra shopping. These tourists did not feel that the Arts Centre was necessarily *the best* place to shop mainly due to prices and opportunities offered by other craft centres, but they did feel that it was a convenient choice at the time. Some of the responses regarding this issue are highlighted below;

*“It’d probably be the Arts Centre; it’s the most popular...”*

*“There are a lot of things to buy there, with so many sellers and all, a bit expensive though...”*

*“That is the easier option, besides you get told about the Arts Centre a lot, and it is in the capital so it’s easier to get to I guess... we have seen other places and villages where they sell crafts, but they’re far way...so it’s just easier”*

Other tourists explained that they usually used free days to visit places that they felt they had not spent enough time at; such as the beaches or art galleries.

In addition to itineraries, the very *nature* of a tour company can determine whether or not tourists have a higher chance of interacting and purchasing from local traders. One

Africa Tours is one example of this. The company only offers a traditionally authentic African experience for its clients. During the interview the owner of the company made it clear that they only utilize local goods and services and paraphernalia. They patronize local chalets and eateries, and avoid the use of any modern conveniences like TV's or air conditions, thereby increasing spending and patronage in the local economy. So unlike the other tour operators whose packages are more generic, but may include a traditional experience, One Africa Tours is the embodiment of the traditional African Experience.

#### **8.3.3.2 The Impacts of Tour Operator Recommendations; the Push Strategy, the Pull strategy and Online Recommendations**

Recommendations made by tour operators are based on three main strategies; the push, the pull and online recommendations. All the tour operators incorporated both of these strategies at one point or another and utilized them based on tourist preferences as well as for the benefit of their companies. This means that in terms of the research objectives, it was found that the *kind* of recommendations that tour operators make *do* have significant impact on the livelihood of local traders. This is because the specific style of recommendations inevitably determines whether traders are hand selected by operators themselves, thereby limiting the number of traders exposed to their clientele in the main craft markets or whether clients are given the opportunity to decide where they would prefer to shop.

The push strategy seeks to capitalize on any social connections such as family relations, friends, and business partners that deal in handicrafts by 'pushing' the seller onto the tourist by bringing the seller to the tourists. This is supported by Holden *et al.*, (2011:330) who referred to the tour operator influence as a 'skewed' influence that involved conducting business with *personally selected actors* within the tourism industry. One of the tour guides of a tour company that is not part of the ten interviewed (and who cannot be named here) revealed that some of the craft sellers that he would bring to his clients were actually relatives of his that were in the business. In some cases

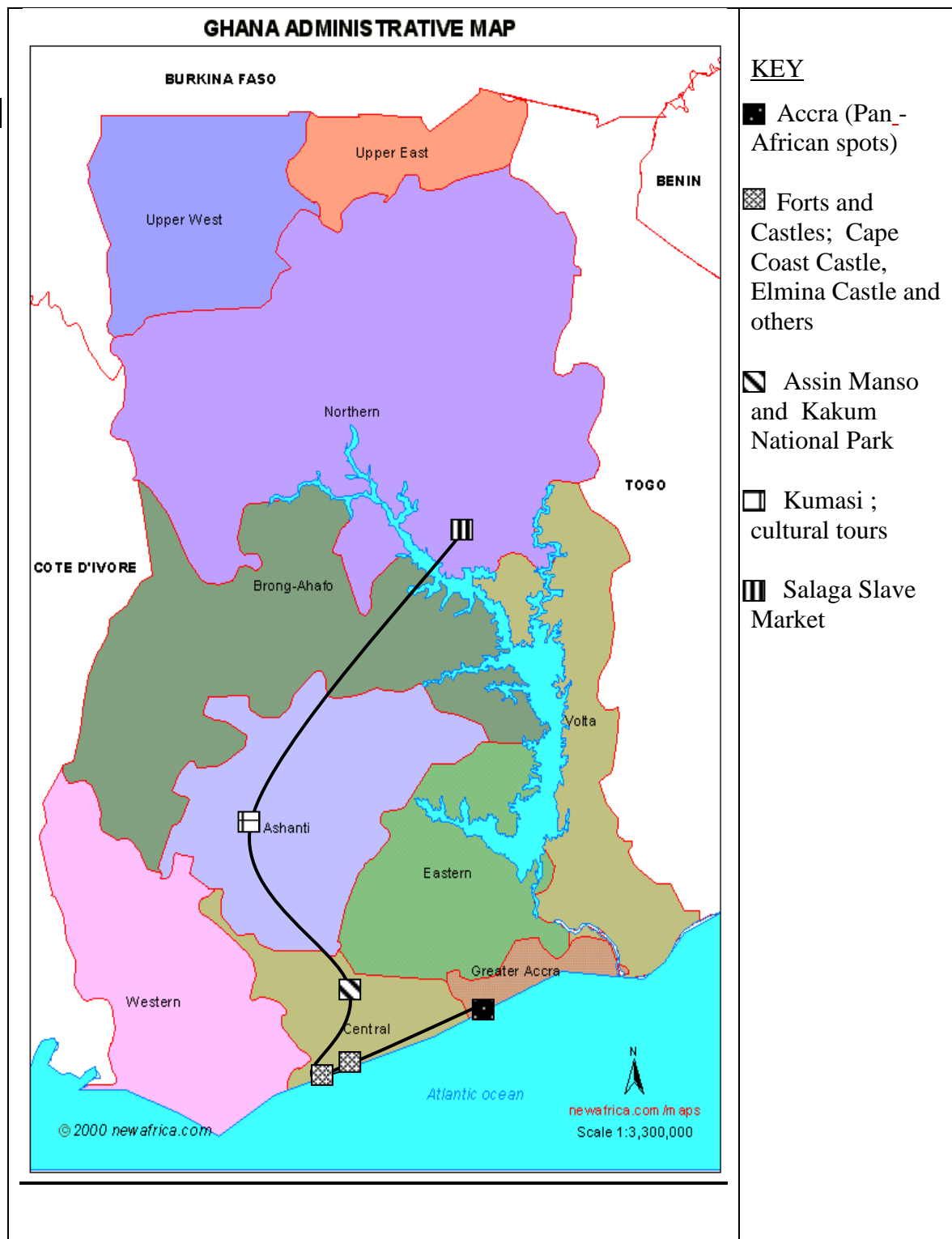


Figure 8.1 Map showing the Diaspora tourist heritage trail  
Source: Adapted from newafrica, 2000.



he would even encourage some of his family and friend to get into the business of craftsmanship so that he could work with them and introduce them to his clients. (Interview, Tour Guide, Tour Operator Anon., June 2010). The source requested that I keep him anonymous because in his company using family members was against their policy. The source also revealed that in his experience many other companies were also using personal relations to cash in on their business. In other instances they even recommended their girlfriends to their clients. Unfortunately the source was not willing to name any other companies that practiced this but did continue to explain that the practice was not illegal but it was more company-based ethics that made the practice a concern. When the companies interviewed were asked whether they used personal connections for recommendations, they explained that all their clients were *professional business clients* that they had worked with or had agreements with, and that no *personal* relationships were used. But traders had a different view on this subject and the general consensus concerning this issue was that personal relationships were indeed used in these instances;

*“Well, that’s the way Ghana is! Everyone wants to make money, some of those sellers are even the brothers and sisters of the Tour Operators, and so it is not strange”*

(Interview, Anonymous, crafts seller at Arts Centre)

*“Ah, but they do it in the ministries, so why won’t they do it there [Tour Companies]”*

(Informal discussion, K. Kaakari, craft seller at Arts Centre)

Here Graceland Travels is used as an example to illustrate how the push strategy is utilized. Graceland used this strategy by arranging selling sessions with local handicraft traders that the company had previously conducted business with. These sellers are their business partners and have been for a while when it comes to interacting with African American tourists. Tour operators like Graceland have established strong relationships with handicraft sellers through the months and years, and as a result, trust them to provide tourists with locally made handicraft items that are of high quality. For the sake

of convenience, sellers (often seamstresses) are brought to the tourists accommodation or hotel, and traders create a display or showcase of selected items that the sellers have pre-selected, usually as a result of what the traders know are the most purchased products (from experience with other African American tourists). The seamstresses would then assist tourists in creating their own garments, allowing tourists to personalize the experience by providing their own fabrics to turn into clothing or in most cases supplying the clients with fabrics themselves. Tourists generally embrace this push strategy as it offers a level of convenience for them. This is due to the fact that tourists do not have to go around searching for the best bargains but trust that their tour operators have found the best seller and best bargain for them. For example in the discussion group session and individual interviews with African American tourists, the following responses were given;

***“Tour operators could get quality and trusted local traders to come to the tourists to see their goods and services...”***

(Respondent A, African American tourist, discussion group session)

***“When I look for a tour operator in my own territory I go to ‘Africa tourific’ because they know Africa, so I travel with them because I feel that they know on the ground the best operating skills so when I get on them I don’t have to look for pirates and ghosts , they know exactly where someone’s going to take me , or if I ask to buy a certain product that they know the territory , so I think it’s a step, a process that I am looking at, at making a quality vacation ”***

(Respondent B, African American tourist, discussion group session).

***“I trust them, so I know that they will get the best bargains for me, if it were someone new then I would be concerned, but I think I know the nature of prices and such so I know, or I should know when something isn’t right”***

(Respondent C, African American tourist, Arts Centre)

Other tourists felt that it was advantageous, provided that the prices being given were not extortionist ones. For example in an interview with AG Travel Services in 2009, the Manager explained that the tourists that they had encountered often opposed their recommendations as they felt like they were being cheated or swindled out of their money. According to them, African Americans are very suspicious and think that the

agency is trying to make a fortune out of them.

*“Most of the tour guides are taking them [African Americans] for a lot of money....a lot of travel agents will give you the highest priced hotels; the Holiday Inn, Novotel - but they won’t talk to you about other places that are good, but are not that much....the travel agent is in it for the money, they’ll send you to Timbuktu - in the desert!”*

(Interview, African American, AAAG, March, 2010)

The interviewee was very concerned about the fact that the African Americans that *he* had encountered were getting ripped off because they did not have enough information about the country or do extensive background information before embarking on trips to the continent;

*“If you come over here and don’t know nothing, then a lot of it is on you, get as much information as possible so you can compare what goes on...”*

He continued to offer an insightful view into his experiences of the pricing strategies of travel agencies that he had encountered;

*“To go to the Akosombo Dam on the Dodi Princess [a boat] - the tickets are GHC30, most travel agencies will charge you a \$100 for the boat trip and then they’ll charge you another \$100 for the transportation from here to the place, so tourists have to take it upon themselves to get the necessary information...tourists are being too laid back and taking the word of the travel agents and lot of travel agents don’t know what they’re talking about!”*

*“It’s upon you as a tourist to know what’s going on.....You need to shop around, unless you’re coming with big money, but if you’re coming with big money then you don’t care, but if you sold your car to come here - I had some of my friends come last may and they were staying at the Holiday Inn, but they could only afford to stay two days, but the woman [tour operator/guide] was trying to get them to stay for a week, and was putting pressure on them saying - ‘you can’t go anyplace, you don’t know nobody’ blah blah blah I told her I’ve been here so I know cheaper places, but if you don’t know they’ll send you from Holiday Inn to Novotel to La Palm”*

(Interview, Anonymous Respondent B, African American tourist at AAAG meeting)

Aside from these exceptions, tourists felt that bringing sellers to them as they neared the

end of their tour was the best, as it gave those tourists who were too tired (mostly due to their age) to go around shopping, a last chance to buy some more craft items. When traders in the Arts Centre were asked what they thought about this strategy, a lot of them stated that they understood the situation because they themselves benefited from these activities. A few traders in the centre revealed that they were sometimes taken to hotels to service some of these tourists, or had friends and relatives in the crafts business that also engaged in it. Others, however, were still concerned about the negative effects that this may have on their businesses;

*“It is a common practice, we all do it. If you are lucky and you know some of them [Tour Operators] then they will connect you”*

(Interview, C. Agyeman, craft seller at Arts Centre)

Another trader nearby who heard the conversation added his views;

*“Yes, but it is spoiling our business! If they [sellers] go there [to the tourist] all the time, how will they come here [Arts Centre] and buy, eh?!”*

(Interview, Olu, crafts seller at Arts Centre, July 2010)

*“Well, that’s the way Ghana is! Everyone wants to make money, some of those sellers are even the brothers and sisters of the Tour Operators, and so it is not strange”*

(Interview, K. Kaakari, crafts seller at Arts Centre, July 2010)

*“That’s the way business is these days, they [African Americans] don’t even come to the centre anymore because of these people [Tour Operators], it’s all whites...they are the ‘free’ ones”*

(Interview, Maame Ataa, crafts seller at Arts Centre, May 2010)

According to Maame Ataa, the *free* nature of European travelers in Ghana is such that a lot of them are usually independents who prefer to explore the country with either a tour guide or on their own. So even though a lot of traders do have apprehensions about this strategy, it is still benefiting some of the sellers who engage in this practice to some degree.

The pull strategy involves taking the tourist to the selling arena to purchase items. Graceland Travel and Tours adopts both the pull and push strategy based on convenience and tourist preference. When using the pull strategy, the company takes their African American tourists to selected handicraft shops in the city of Accra, of which the Arts Centre is (once again) the most popular. During visits to specific sites that have handicraft sellers, groups are also allowed to stop for an hour and roam around or tourists in some cases would often ask to tour on their own. Although there is no guarantee that items will be purchased, it does however provide a sales opportunity for local craft sellers and makers. Tour operators such as Felix Ngua Tours and Sankofa Meroe also adopt a pull strategy by taking tourists to craft centres such as Bonwire, the Arts Centre and other carving shops. This strategy is generally been accepted by most of the tourists interviewed as a convenient means of getting things done. For example according to some tourists;

*“It is a good idea to use tourist representatives or operators. **You cannot visit every part of the country so they come in handy to put specific sites and craft sellers in the spotlight...**this will save tourists’ time and money, especially money”*

(Interview, Ms. H. King, African American tourist, February 2012)

*“It’s so much easier for them [tour operators] to figure things out, that’s what I paid them for. They know who’s selling what, so I believe that they’ll give me the best bargain, I know some people think that they’re trying to cheat us, but I don’t think so”*

(Interview, L. Bailey, African American tourist, February 2012)

*“It really is a good way of meeting the traders, you can talk to them, ask them questions, like who made this and how - I mean you can also ask them if they come to you and all, but it’s just better to get out there and see them in their environment”*

(Interview, M. Britto, African American tourist, March 2012)

But like the push strategy, the pull strategy also has its share of critics. According to one interviewee, the ‘forced’ recommendations and the restrictive and sometimes highly structured nature of being part of tour groups discouraged him from engaging in tours;

*“In my earlier trips I did not enjoy any freedom under my tour guides, that why I stopped using them. You only move according to where they will want you to go and buy what they want, maybe for personal and self - seeking reasons”*

(Interview, D. Campbell, African American tourist, March 2012)

Traders, needless to say, were more supportive of this strategy as it was their primary means of engaging with tourists. However, when it comes to analyzing how this strategy affected craft sales, it was evident that even the effectiveness of it (as has already been mentioned throughout this chapter) has been diluted by *where* tourists are taken. The impacts of this strategy are very similar to the impacts of the push strategy, in that handicrafts sellers do benefit, but the benefits are once again redirected towards ‘other’ sellers. In this case, interviews with tourists and operators, as well as observations, reveal that in the first few days and the last couple of days of a tourists’ time which is spent in Accra, the Arts Centre ‘benefits’ the most from tourist exposure. But this ‘exposure’ has been viewed as semi-beneficial by traders.

The third kind of recommendation is the online recommendation, which places a spotlight on specific handicraft centres and in some ways *preconditions* tourists to certain trading centres long before they have left the originating region. In other words, these online recommendations made by operators prepare the tourist (especially the first-time tourist), and places them in a mental state of acceptance of the suggestion. As shown, tourists have a certain level of trust for their chosen operator and understandably entrust them with choosing an optimum location for visiting or shopping (Interview, African American Tourists; discussion group and semi-structured interviews).

Therefore power lies with the operator to place certain craft centres at the forefront of their itineraries. This type of ‘pull’ strategy online also makes recommendations to tourists by suggesting that the free days allocated for most tour structures can be spent revisiting markets and crafts villages to do some extra shopping.

### **8.3.3.3 The Rationale Underpinning Operator Recommendations**

Recommendations made by tour operators to tourists are based on four main factors;

- a. Specific requirements of tourists; quality, style or type
- b. Popularity of handicraft market/area/trader amongst tourists and operators themselves
- c. Affordability of the handicraft business
- d. Proximity of the handicraft business

According to Nayak Travel and Tours, feedback from their clients on the quality and authenticity of tourism products or what is considered truly African, is one of the reasons that specific recommendation are made. Their clients prefer to purchase traditionally manufactured products such as tie and dye clothing and miniature carvings than any other non-traditionally made item. As discussed in Chapter 5, the vulnerability of the fabrics industry has made the acquisition of locally made authentic textiles a rarity, and it is for this reason that the personalized tailoring of traditionally made fabrics has become a favourite activity amongst many African American tourists. Tourists appreciate the power they have to pick out a fabric of their choice and decide on which style they would like it to be transformed into. African American repeat visitors who are familiar with the process continually request for operators to bring familiar traders to their accommodations. For instance, in the discussion group session, one tourist respondent, a frequent visitor to Ghana stated that she usually requested for her favourite seamstress to be brought to the hotel so she can purchase from her.

Complaints about the quality of handicrafts purchased are another issue of concern amongst some of the operators in the sample. Carvings that had recently been purchased by tourists had deteriorated within a short period of time due to the effects of the weather (a characteristic that tourists had hoped sellers had protected their products against). This had significantly impacted on the operator's choice of handicraft sellers in the future (Interview, Graceland Travel and Tours, 2009). So to ensure consistency in the quality of the crafts, Graceland Travels would request that craftsmen or women that

had catered to them on previous trips would cater to them once more. Nayak Travel Services had similar complaints from his African American clientele. The specific types of crafts also underpin where operators recommend their clients go to. According to Starline, their African American tourists have a fondness for authentic textiles and are usually more interested in visiting the *Makola* Market, which has a large fabric section and Bonwire. Lomo Nainoo Tours stated that they took their clients to the Accra Arts Centre and to the fabric section of the Makola market, based on their preference for authentic fabrics and handicrafts and the operators' knowledge of popular centres that had these. This case is a typical example of proximity having an influence on direction of expenditure. As the Makola market is in the centre of Accra, companies like Lomo Nainoo would understandably take their clients there to purchase fabrics, but this enforces the previously mentioned vulnerabilities of other fabric sellers in places like Cape Coast and Elmina. The desire for affordable items had a considerable impact on where tour operators took their clients. Although this is not an uncommon characteristic for most tourists or shoppers in general, handicraft traders often said that they felt African Americans were far more likely than other foreign tourists (African, Caucasian or otherwise) to be skeptical about prices given for crafts by traders and thought that they might be in the process of being cheated. The tourists themselves felt that handicraft traders intentionally increased prices to unreasonable amounts in the hopes that the ignorant tourists would agree (Interview, discussion group session, July 2011).

There is some evidence that this need to bargain also affects the way in which tour operators handle their clients. The African American tourist's desire to bargain for goods has caused tour operators to recommend wholesale areas of handicraft commerce such as 'Ahwiaa' (wood carving village, located 12km north of Kumasi), the Krobo bead market, the Accra Arts Centre rather than smaller retail outlets. This is because larger wholesale craft centres are more willing to bargain the prices of craft items than the individual sellers who may have limited competition, or the smaller high end stores who have to consider their overheads. This is not to suggest that traders in the larger craft centres do not have rental fees or employees to pay. Although they do have



financial obligations of their own, the intense competition means that traders have often had to sacrifice large profits to make some sales. In addition to this, 'haggling' is a strategy that is accepted in Ghanaian society. Observations found that many sellers actually enjoy this process. And though sellers would have ultimately preferred that the initial high price was accepted, the process of pricing-down the item till it reaches a cost-plus amount is understood as a business strategy and accepted.

#### **8.4 Tour Operators' Views on Tourist Spending Habits**

Tour operator views and observations of the spending habits of their clients are similar to that of the experiences of traders during commerce and from the tourists themselves (Interviews and discussion group session). Owners of the tour companies often take on the role of tour guide and travel with their clients, often partaking in many of the activities that their clients engage in. These managers do this for several reasons; mainly because they want to ensure that their client's needs and requirements are being met, but also because their businesses are small and have few staff members and so it is often financially beneficial for staff, including the owner, to take on duo roles. Another reason for this stems from the fact that many owners or managers prefer not to entrust their special needs clients or high-profile clients to tour guides and would rather ensure that they can guarantee that their clients' needs are being met themselves. But these are usually practiced by smaller companies. Because of their level of involvement with their clients, tour companies are highly aware of the products that they purchased because they 1) recommend the seller or craft centre and so are aware of the range of items purchased 2) accompany tourists on their shopping activities to help them with bargaining and 3) often discuss or recount the day's events with their tourists when they return to the hotel with these items. The most popular purchases are arts and crafts in the form of carvings, sculptures, fabrics and beads (Table 8.7). But African Americans are considered to be a frugal group who are very careful with their money. This assertion seemed to contradict the expenditure figures given by the very same operators. According to them, tourists can spend anywhere from \$500-\$5000 on purchases.

Table 8.7 Tour operator views on craft products purchased by their clients

Tour company	Handicrafts purchased by clients
Ghana Ecotours.com ltd./ Felix Ngua Travel and Tours	Jewellery beads, African fabrics
One Africa Tours	African clothing
Nayak Holiday Services	carvings, African clothing
Starline Travel & Tours	Jewellery Beads, Arts and crafts, traditional clothing
AG. Leisure Services	Arts and crafts
Graceland Travel & Tours	Arts and crafts
Sunseekers Tours	Arts and crafts, Souvenirs
Sankofa Meroe Tours	Wood carvings, fabrics
Sagrenti Travel and Tours	African clothing, figurines, sculptures
Lomo-Nainoo Interview	Clothes and traditional fabrics
Land Tours Ghana Limited	Arts and crafts

According to Sunseekers their clients spends on average \$400 during their time in the country. But as shown in tourist expenditure on crafts in Chapter 6, tourists *are* spending significant amounts in this area.

### 8.5 Influence of Tourists on the Ghana Tourism Sector

Finally tour operators were asked what impacts they believed their clients had on tourism development in the country overall. Responses and feelings were mixed. There is a general recognition of the financial benefits that Diaspora tourists and especially African Americans have on the Ghanaian tourism sector, but tourist characteristics, expectations and behaviour are seen as constraints to these benefits. Graceland relayed their hopes that African Americans would increase their focus on business and investment opportunities in the country but was concerned that tourists were focused on ‘looking around’ rather than investing. In the company’s opinion it was very common for visitors to explore investment opportunities only to return to their countries of origin and not be heard from again. Starline reiterated the financial value of the up market African American tourist clientele in relation to their foreign counterparts. According to them, African Americans tourists are more upscale than their European tourists who

usually prefer to go on a low budget (in terms of hotels, car accommodation). In other words African Americans prefer comfortable, high-quality utilities, and are willing to pay for them, so they are valuable to the Ghanaian tourism market. They travel in large groups and therefore more likely to contribute more money to tourism economy.

Lomo Nainoo tours also observed the far reaching effects of the African American tourists:

*“Any foreigner or any visitor that comes to Ghana has a contribution...we have that ripple effect....when they come, the hotel benefits, when they come whoever does his vegetable garden will benefit because he supplies the hotel, the arts and crafts people too benefit....transportation system too benefits...so they contribute in various ways”*

(Interview, Lomo Nainoo Tours, 2009)

The far reaching effects of their expenditure are illustrated in Figure 8.2. Nayak Travel Services, however, felt that though tourists *were* contributing to the economy, these contributions were inadequate in certain situations and could not fully support the economy;

*‘Why should tourists pay \$1,000 for airfare and then 50p for entrance fees’*

## **8.6 Summary**

So in summary tour operators have a considerable impact on the direction of tourist expenditure on crafts. Certain social and political barriers such as safety, crime, politics, communication that affect other tour operators and hindered their clients from interacting with the local community (Spenceley, 2007) did not factor in this case. It was mainly the structure of tour itineraries and operator recommendations and the various issues underpinning these recommendations that affected the time or opportunity that tourists had to purchase handicraft items. Underlying variables such as the lack of quality of handicraft items are causing tour operators to be selective in their choice of traders to do business with, thus redirecting spend from some craft centres to others. But

this redirection is not having the desired affect for the redirected craft centres as the redirection is still not translating into *adequate* sales for the craft sellers. But there are two sides to the coin, because in order for operators to encourage their clients to purchase crafts from places like Arts Centre or Elmina and Cape Coast, the quality of the crafts have to be satisfactory. So though operators are impacting on where expenditure is directed, the traders also share some of the responsibility for this taking place. The covert use of personal relationships in recommendations is also undermining the level of exposure that craft sellers in larger markets would have. In addition to this, aggressive selling by traders is once again at the forefront of discussion as another constraint to tour operator recommendations and structure of itineraries. Though aggressive selling in places like the Art Centre has not stopped operators from removing them from their itineraries, traders have expressed their concern with the role that operators play in keeping their clients from these places. But traders in the Arts Centre are also benefiting from tour operator recommendations as some of the sellers there are ‘recommended sellers’ themselves who undoubtedly profit from these companies. It would be beneficial then for more operators to recommend more craftsmen to their clients using the push strategy rather than the pull strategy, so in this way sales are guaranteed on some level.

Proximity, convenience and experience are three other factors that affect the tourist decision to shop at a certain location or not. And as one of the main objectives of a tour operator is to make the touristic experience as comfortable enjoyable and convenient as possible, operators have a responsibility to their clients to ensure that whatever decisions that they make has the clients’ best interests at heart. Unfortunately these decisions further compound the vulnerabilities of craft centres in places like Elmina and Cape Coast who are often at the mercy of the after-thought.

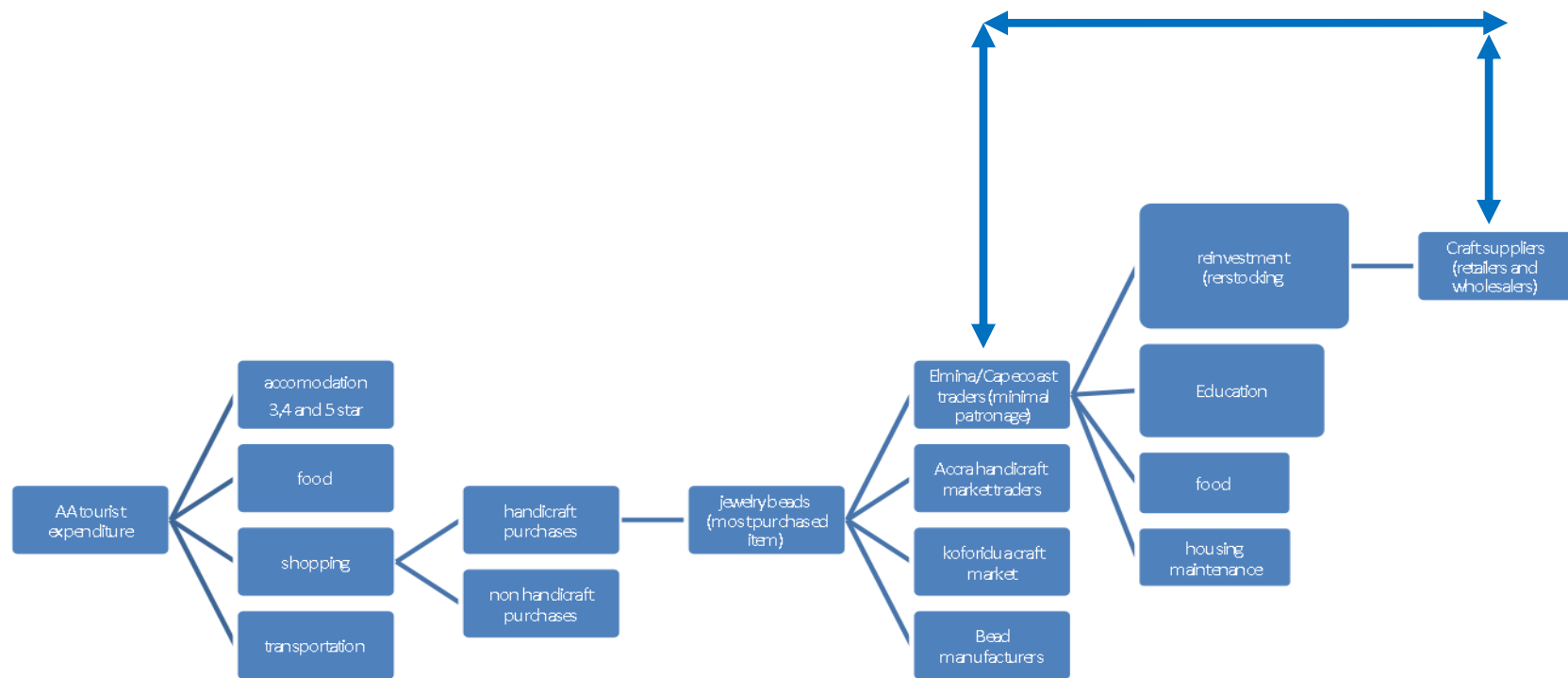


Figure 8.2 Tourist Expenditure Flows

## **Chapter 9. Conclusions**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the key findings of the study by addressing the research objectives and exploring a range of related issues and themes. Firstly it synthesizes the main findings and discusses the theoretical implications that it has for key themes such as Diaspora relations, homeland development, tourism development and informal sector livelihoods. It also reflects on the vulnerability of the craft traders by focusing on specific issues. Finally it discusses the limitations of the study and implications for possible future directions for research are outlined.

This research study sought to explore the impacts of African American tourist expenditure on the livelihoods of local craft traders in southern Ghana. As explained in Chapter one, using the Diaspora tourist market as a vehicle for examination was particularly relevant and important to this study because of the shared history between the tourist and their homeland's local population, and the importance that they have for the development of Ghana's cultural heritage tourism market. Also tracing the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure using one particular handicraft, beaded craft, facilitated a path on which the beneficiaries of the tourist dollar could be effectively traced.

Relevant theoretical literature was used to situate Diaspora relations, the African American tourist, homeland development and livelihoods debates within tourism. The general literature on the impacts that African American tourists had on their homeland was largely limited to social controversies and issues of heritage, identity and assimilation into the local community, with limited focus on African American tourist impacts on the local community through expenditure on handicrafts in informal and vulnerable craft sectors. So five specific objectives were explored:

- a. To explore popular Ghanaian handicrafts that are produced for, and consumed by, African American tourists in Ghana
- b. To assess the spending habits of African American tourists on craft products
- c. To assess how expenditure from craft sales is used by handicraft traders;
- d. To assess the roles that tour operators and their management of African American tourists play in influencing the flow of tourist expenditure;
- e. To trace or map the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure for one craft product at specific sites along the tourist trail.

## **9.2 Discussion of Main Findings**

The key research findings were presented in Chapters five, six, seven and eight. Chapter five focused on the nature of Ghanaian handicraft products and traders' characteristics and perceptions of African American tourists; Chapter six dealt with trader incomes and expenditure patterns from craft sales and how other experiences with the African American tourist were impacting on their businesses; Chapter seven traced the network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure and explored how the various actors within the beaded craft commodity chain were functioning and Chapter eight examined the role played by tour operators in affecting tourist spending patterns.

In terms of the research objectives around which this study has been framed, it was found that the African American tourist market alone do not provide traders with a survivable or livable income. Diaspora tourists provide a significant input into traders' total incomes. But they do not spend enough to provide the sole source of traders' incomes - traders need other buyers and other sources of livelihood to sustain themselves. In spite of tourist complaints of high craft prices, the prices of crafts are generally reasonable considering the materials used and processes involved in their production. Because of the increased costs involved in material procurements and production, traders cannot realistically decrease prices without selling at a loss, likewise, increasing prices even further would deter more African American tourists from making

purchases. Though haggling may give tourists a bargain, the decrease would not be a drastic one. So this option of improving tourist contributions to trader livelihoods by increasing prices of most crafts would have a negative effect, and the saturation of many goods in the market also means that many of the traders would be competing for a smaller purchasing market, constraining things further. There are a number of problems which constrain the positive impact of the Diaspora tourist sector. Trader livelihoods through tourist expenditure are affected by social variables such as heritage, identity and behaviour, and also by inadequate tourist patronage, particular aspects of tourist expenditure patterns and strategies, issues with bead production, internal and external competition, influence of the tour operators' recommendations and their itineraries, aggressive selling techniques and the disadvantages of being situated close to dark tourism sites.

### **9.2.1 Tourist Spending Habits on Crafts**

Although the findings of this study are that Ghanaian craft traders at sites frequented by Diaspora tourists cannot rely on those tourists alone for their livelihoods, it has also been demonstrated that Diaspora tourists are an important market for particular local crafts. A very significant proportion of African American tourist shopping money in Ghana goes on handicraft products. When African American tourists *do* spend on crafts the amounts can be quite significant as tourists have spent as much as \$6,800 or 80% of their shopping budget on crafts. The average expenditure on crafts for the tourists sampled was a little over half (55%) of their shopping budget. In other words tourists sampled spent \$22,300 out of a possible \$40,320 on crafts, further reflecting the importance of this tourist market for the handicraft industry. This finding can be situated in other studies by Mitchell and Coles (2009) who found that craft expenditure, though low by international standards was valuable to many of the vulnerable producers and retailers in parts of Ethiopia.

Fabrics and beaded jewellery are currently dominating the range of crafts being purchased. This is partly because the history of African slavery has played a key role in



tourist expenditure on craft products, especially beads. As explained in Chapter five, the use of beads as a form of barter during the slave trade has given these crafts a unique place in the psyche of the Diaspora tourists, and these symbols of culture and heritage embedded in Ghanaian handicrafts have become significant symbols to the Diaspora tourist.

On the other hand, African American tourists proved to have some major concerns about the present condition of handicrafts in Ghana. They raised particular concerns about the scarcity of authentic crafts, the quality of the crafts, the domination of imported goods and the monotony in the craft goods that were offered. The tourists suggested that the market could expand, and become more lucrative and contribute more to the economy if these issues were addressed.

This has significant implications when it comes to debates about African Diaspora relations. A significant finding is that the social discord that has existed between the African Diaspora and their homeland (Bruner, 1996; Finley, 2001; Mensah, 2004; Mwakikagile, 2005 & 2006; Richards, 2005; Schramm, 2004; Timothy and Teye, 2004; Polgreen, 2005b) is no longer confined to issues of tourist identity and Africanism, but also now embraces issues of identity which are tied up with the nature and characteristics of local craft products. This has resulted in the spending habits of African American tourists becoming quite strategic, even to the detriment of the craft traders. These tourists no longer fit into the Ghanaian model of the *naïve western tourist* who has no awareness of local pricing strategies and nuances and is therefore taken advantage of; a characteristic that many other foreign tourists are known for by Ghanaian traders.

Experience of spending in the homeland has seen the African American tourist in Ghana evolve into a smarter, more frugal spending group that requires the best product at the best price. This shift in their buying habits has existed for some time and traders, who are struggling with the *'I'll come back later'* attitude of potential buyers, are using a specific selling strategy to deal with this: that is a more aggressive approach to

handicraft selling. But aggressive selling strategies are by no means confined to the African American tourist. They are strategies that traders in Ghana employ overall because of the harsh economic conditions that are causing increases in the prices of goods and ultimately resulting in a lack of customer purchases. So both the tourist and the trader have strategized to deal with each other.

And because of this, the inadequate number of African American tourists that the traders claimed were visiting their craft traders are not automatically translating into sales being made (Chapter six), creating the first wave of vulnerability for the sector. The most pressing concern was the level of authenticity of products and the adulteration of authenticity from the infiltration of modernity. But an important issue to consider here is the element of contradiction in the phrase '*authentic tourist product*'. The authenticity debate has become sophisticated over the past couple of decades and concerns with concepts such as performative authenticity and staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1999) within cultural heritage tourism in particular has meant that anything that is produced just for the tourist is automatically suspect in terms of its authenticity. As the tourist product exists solely to serve the needs and wants of the tourists, and most demand for crafts is from tourists, then production is inevitably *tailored* to suit demand. It is this 'tailoring' that nullifies the authenticity of craft products. So there is a level of concern as to whether tourist products can ever be classified as authentic or fashioned into something authentic.

One important view on authenticity was given by Cohen (1988) who came to the conclusion that authenticity was not simply a state of being but was something that was negotiable. Cohen argued that authenticity should be seen in a new light because inevitable cultural evolutions within societies would inevitably affect the nature of cultural products as well. So as cultures evolve so does their authenticity. Similarly, Shaw and Williams (2009:137), projecting Bruner's (1989) view of 'constructed authenticity' argued that authenticity is "socially constructed and not objectively measurable". Timothy and Boyd (2003) also argued that authenticity was very much an issue of *interpretation* and it was not clear whether the tourists had this same

perspective. But in this case tourists are yet to view authenticity of crafts in such a way. Tourists are measuring authenticity using a benchmark of *the past*, a past that has been subject to evolution or development for centuries. To them authenticity is synonymous with *indigenouness*; a state of African culture prior to modernization or Western influences. Cohen (1988) argued that this touristic desire for the pre-modernization era styling of African crafts was the reason that tourists desired them to be made by hand using resources from nature. But like authenticity, *indigenouness* is a relative term, because craft products that were a century old were at one stage an evolution or development of earlier products. So Cohen's argument on the evolution of culture being synonymous with the evolution of their authenticity has validity.

But perhaps another point of view, which according to Cohen, is rarely raised, is the *local community's point of view* on what is authentic. Cohen explained that the concept of authenticity was often seen through the eyes of the tourists and that it was rare that the host community views on whether they recognized such a term themselves was explored. This study found that the African American tourists were indeed interpreting authenticity in their own way when it came to handicrafts, but were not taking into consideration the craft seller's understanding or view of what was authentic. Tourists must accept that authenticity is a concept that has two sides and must take a participatory approach by involving traders when it comes to understanding, accepting and interpreting authenticity. It must be acknowledged at this point that traders were not queried on what their views on authenticity were and this argument would have been more robust had this issue been explored further but nonetheless this was an important finding.

G.Richards (2002:37) argued that "if tourists appreciate that crafts products have the 'added value' of scarcity, uniqueness and *authenticity*, they are willing to pay more for them". But this has not proven to be the case in this study because the African American tourist only patronises Ghanaian crafts if *their* idea of what is authentic is realized. One example is the Akuaba doll that tourists suggested should be reintroduced into the current range of handicraft products. As explained in Chapter five, the *primary* and *only*

use of Akuaba dolls, prior to commercialization was for fertility, but because of global patronage and tourist demand, the production of the Akuaba doll is now merely aesthetic rather than functional, so its *commoditization* has obscured the very purpose for which it was created. But in spite of the culture-disintegrating characteristics of commoditization, Cohen (1988) argued that it also facilitated the conservations and revitalization of cultures and practices which would otherwise have become extinct in the absence of touristic demand.

This issue that African Americans and other African Diasporas have with Ghana's *management* of authenticity is not confined to crafts but has involved the heritage sites themselves. This commoditization of the authentic has led to intense debates surrounding which key thematic and conceptual components of heritage sites should be maintained, emphasized or packaged for commercial absorption (Finley, 2001).

Another issue is the consequences or the implications of such a request for authentic products and services. As discussed in Chapter six, the constant criticism and queries made by tourists concerning their craft products was making them consider changing their product to satisfy the tourist desires. About 40% of traders had already changed their product to satisfy the tourist. This shows that there is some flexibility and awareness of tourist demands in the craft markets but this has not led to a wholesale shift in products. Many of the 'old' and tested products do still sell pretty well and some traders are sticking with them; but a significant minority are also experimenting with adapted products as well. These adapted versions are also subject to contested authenticity, not just based on the fact that they are being crafted for tourist demand but also for the fact that they are being evolved from their original state to a reconstructed state. So although tourists sought authentic products, there were oblivious to the fact that their desire for what they regarded as authentic would mean that traders would have to diversify their business strategies and adopt either one of two strategies; either to succumb to more expensive procurement, design and management channels, which would ultimately result in very expensive products being sold, or secondly to resort to cheaper alternatives to satisfy tourist demand. But these 'cheaper alternatives' have

involved the importation of goods and resources or using sub-standard materials rather than procuring more expensive local materials, thereby further *tainting* the ‘authenticity request’ and creating a vicious cycle of *‘recycled authenticity’*.

#### **9.2.1.1 The Need to Evolve Craft Production**

In addition to a desire for authenticity, tourists expressed a desire for less monotony in the ‘traditional’ handicraft trade in Ghana, which often included wood carvings, sculptures, fabric work and leather work. Tourists suggested the introduction of souvenir style crafts such as cups, T-shirts, badges and caps, bringing back the Akuaba Doll and the incorporation of Shea butter, a product growing in popularity amongst Diaspora tourists. The authenticity-diversification request in itself is a kind of oxymoron, as the *‘Americanization’* of the Ghanaian tourist product by incorporating American style souvenirs cannot coexist with the Ghanaian ideal of what is truly authentic. So not only do tourists desire authenticity, but they are also subconsciously asking for *familiarity* in Ghanaian crafts. This issue about diversification of craft production and presentation has also been identified by the National Tourism Marketing Strategy (NTMS, 2009). Unfortunately such a break from monotony was not yet evident in many of the informal crafts centres encountered in this study. This craftsmanship was more common in the formal and high end craft stores that sold product merchandising of major companies, businesses and brands such as beverage manufacturing companies, mobile phone operators, sports and entertainment. But this needs to extend into all the informal craft centres and manufacturers for them to benefit. Three things must exist for this venture to be successful: the production of souvenir-style goods would have to be local in order to avoid further leakages; there would have to be a ‘buying market’ ready for both authentic crafts and the souvenir-style inspired ones in order for traders to invest in this level of product differentiation; and lastly tourists must be willing to pay a premium price for any craft items that have been diversified or repackaged as a result of tourist suggestions (G. Richards, 2002). So though African Americans tourists have made it clear that they want to see differentiation and authentication of Ghanaian craft products, what they actually desire is what *used* to be produced for local use or local demand. But

the reality is that the only authentic crafts that are available in tourist markets are simply a *version* of the authentic. They are simply a *front region representation* of the *back regions* (MacCannell, 1999), where craftsmanship exists and is devoid of tourist demand and influence. So because of their very nature, the quest for authenticity in crafts products by African American *tourists* has become and will continue to be a futile endeavour.

Another interesting insight worth mentioning here is that it is not just financial gain, but social engagements in terms of talkativeness and friendliness which traders value in the tourist-trader exchange. Traders valued the verbal interaction that took place during the purchase of goods. These social characteristics were considered very important to traders when encountering visitors. They were also frequently mentioned and used as defining characteristics when used comparatively against other tourists (as discussed in Chapter six).

### **9.2.2 The Network of Beneficiaries of Tourist Expenditure in the Beaded Craft Commodity Chain**

The network of beneficiaries of tourist expenditure includes producers and providers of raw materials, the production and manufacturing centres and the retail and wholesale centres actors that are both local and international. The spatial dispersion and concentration of production and distribution in the beaded craft commodity chain is one area tourist demand has affected. As mentioned throughout the thesis, the proximity of craftsmen to the Elmina and Cape Coast slave castles is deterring sales, and as a result traders have resorted to aggressive selling techniques, which is further compounding the problem. Traders have logically worked out that they need to locate themselves as close to the castles as possible, simply because these are places where tourists, including African Americans, frequently visit. As explained the tourists are particularly drawn to these sites because of their heritage links to slavery and colonization. However, one result of this is the saturation of traders at these sites, which has hindered the assurance of a decent income from craft sales. Because there are too many traders and too few

tourists, the average tourist expenditure does not translate into sufficient income for each trader, even if it were spread evenly. This is a fairly generalisable situation in any market where there is no control on the number of entrants as the ratio of sellers to buyers would be unprofitable.

Thus the edge on who gets the sales and is more profitable will depend on ‘marketing’ which in this case translates into ‘aggressive sales’. But there is another downside to this, which is that this way of selling deters quite a significant amount of expenditure from wary tourists who find this intrusive. But this situation is complex in itself because the relocation of these sellers would not be feasible so they have no other choice than to remain in that area and continue to aggressively market their goods. In order for traders to attract the tourists to their stalls, they may want to reconsider the ‘type’ of crafts being sold. The traditional range of craft paraphernalia is understandably in contradiction with the *theme* of the slave castles, so traders may have to resort to the very same ‘souvenir’ style of craft production that tourists had suggested. Trader craft products need to reflect the site at which they are located. Memorabilia related to the heritage sites can be introduced but must be *sensitively* executed, as the debates surrounding not only the commoditization of heritage but also the commoditisation of dark heritage (Lennon and Foley, 2000; Dann and Seaton, 2001; Strange and Kempa, 2003) have also argued their level of appropriateness.

A particularly interesting result from this study was the identification of a **power shift** within the chain from the larger bead manufacturing businesses to the smaller informal ones. As explained in Chapter seven, larger companies like Cedi Factory left the remaining competition vulnerable, and low patronage eventually forced some of the other businesses to shut down. Some of the former owners of the defunct businesses turned to informal trade as a means of survival and maintaining a livelihood. A lack of profits coupled with the uphill battle of trying to compete with one-man businesses forced owners of larger businesses to reconsider other alternatives to sustaining a livelihood. But this power shift is unusual in a globalizing and liberalizing world and in many product markets where the small-scale producers at the local level tend to get

pushed out by the larger and often foreign businesses, thereby diminishing the employment and livelihood impacts of that product. But in this case, it is the small and local businesses that have beaten the larger companies. This study has shown that these one-man businesses, though they can be classified as vulnerable, are formidable actors within the chain and that despite the competition from a large factory like Cedi Beads Industry, they can stand on their own and make a good living.

But actors in this chain like other commodity chains are value and price conscious and use necessary strategies to ensure that they are saving as much money as they can. That is why they prefer the one-man businesses rather than the large suppliers. But this is not to say that they do not use them at all. The large factories are still indispensable because of their ability to undertake specific types of bead production that many of the one-man businesses are not equipped to undertake.

The Gao glass supplier is one of the other key beneficiaries. As suppliers of glass to three main actors in the commodity chain, they are essential in glass bead production. And their mobility means that they can reach other suppliers and buyers easily. Thus, this study shows that tourist expenditure on beads is reaching many of the more vulnerable actors in the chain, in line with findings in other tourism studies (Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Ashley 2000; Ashley and Mitchell 2007; Mitchell and Coles, 2009). In addition to this, tourist expenditure on beads is also helping to recycle certain resources in the bead supply network. As discussed in Chapter seven, bead production involves the use, sale and reuse of discarded or used glass (wine bottles, medicinal bottles, soda bottles, Louvre glass etc). This is very sustainable as the glass does not need to be thrown away but is now being worn as jewellery. So the Gao merchants are the preferred means of acquiring glass which further supports the conclusion about the significance of the local informal sector actors in supply chains.

This has important implications for tourism development because it is common for governments and tourism-related bodies to focus on the larger picture with regards to tourism benefits and overlook its impacts on local communities (Hampton 2005). The



findings about the spread of benefits from bead production and sales reaching the vulnerable are a good reason for the Ghanaian government to include them in their tourism priorities as a significant development of the informal sector. Though these local suppliers are crucial to sustaining bead production, it is the international suppliers and manufacturers that would ultimately cripple the beaded craft industry if they were removed from the network. This stems from two main reasons: the excessive amount of glass bead imports from China and other countries; and the fact that most glass products in Ghana are imported. So glass production needs to be localized to ensure that the full range of financial benefits do not leak.

Ultimately it is the traders in the Koforidua Crafts Market that benefit the most from African American tourist expenditure. It has exhibited none of the vulnerability factors described in Table 7.8, is the most centralized point in the craft beneficiary chain, and is the point at which almost all the remaining traders in the chain (Figure 7.1) buy from or sell to. The reduced prices of beads found at the market have also made it an attractive location to visit. The Koforidua Craft Market has the geographical advantage in that it is not located close to any slave castles or tormented by colonial memories, and is closer to the capital city, Accra, than the Elmina and Cape Coast craft centres. It also has more variety of craft items than many of the other craft centres and is considered cheaper than other centres.

One limitation in this area was not being able to determine which actors in the chain make the most money. This was because of the unavailability of data on the net income for the various actors after they had accounted for stock and any other costs. The limited data on trader incomes at peak periods (Table 7.7) could only provide some form of reference to illustrate who had the *potential* to make the most money. Based on the figures, it was the craft sellers from Elmina and Cape Coast and the Arts Centre who *made the highest* amount in craft sales *during peak periods*. But this was mainly due to the higher prices of goods in these craft centres as the *retail* points in the chain. This is because these craft sellers do not engage in craft production on the scale that the manufacturers do, so they are not burdened by material and manufacturing costs. But

they are still burdened by procurement costs and other business management costs. So although these two actors have their own share of constraints, they still have the potential to make considerable amounts of money. The international beneficiaries from China as well as other sub-Saharan African markets (Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal) indicate that tourist expenditure in Ghana is also aiding bead sellers and manufacturers in neighbouring African countries. But the Chinese in particular are playing a unique role in the commodity chain, as is discussed below.

#### **9.2.2.1 The Chinese Influence**

As actors in the commodity chain, the Chinese have had a significantly *negative* influence on the handicraft commodity chain in southern Ghana, but particularly on the beaded crafts network. There is a power struggle between them and the local bead sellers that is threatening to destabilize authentic bead production in the country. Such key findings related to the Chinese influence on handicraft productivity in Ghana can be situated within a number of key studies related to the relationship between China and Africa.

This finding also reflects the negative effects that importation has had on many developing economies, as argued by Naidu and Davies (2006:79) “African producers have been marginalised and displaced from the market because of the influx of cheap Chinese goods...” and thus “...their livelihoods will have been eroded by competition from cheap Chinese goods”. This is heavily reflected in the study as imports of glass beads from China have played a controversial role in the craft commodity chain. Imports of glass beads by Ghanaians from China dominate the bead import market nowadays. This means that in addition to leakages from the textile industry, Diaspora tourist expenditure on glass beads also fuels more imports from China and thus profits for Chinese businesses.

But Taylor (2009) came to the conclusion that the view of the crippling effect of Chinese imports on the African manufacturing industry should be put into perspective

and acknowledgement made of the fact that market threats and weaknesses within many African industries existed prior to Chinese involvement. This implies that the '*better something than nothing*' approach is better. Ghana's textile manufacturing industry (as discussed in Chapter 5) in the country had begun to decline in the 1970's and it is understandable that blaming the Chinese presence for industrial upheavals would be a little premature. But imports and exports are part of a functioning economy provided that these imports are not excessive to the point that they destabilize local production. But this is not the case amongst beaded craft producers in the study sites. The economic *sting* of the Chinese presence has *demonised* them in the eyes of handicraft sellers. But there has also been the argument made by Girouard (2008) that though the Chinese market has flooded African industries, local sellers *do* benefit from the low costs of Chinese goods. Taylor (2009) similarly argued that the growing relationship between China and Africa is one that has to be viewed more objectively because of the history of that relationship and the advantages and disadvantages that exist in that relationship. This implies that this reciprocity in some way should offset their domination of their market. And though it has been acknowledged that investments, aid and grants from China have been beneficial to the continent (Junbo, 2007), this is unlikely to be any consolation to craft sellers. Because beaded crafts and handicrafts in general are essential parts of their livelihoods, and their illegal duplication, cheaper costs and considerable imports is pushing the glass bead trade into a specialised rather than mainstream craft.

But the *demonization* of the Chinese presence in Ghana is also part of a much larger debate that concerns the perceived increase and excessive involvement of China in Africa and in sub-Saharan Africa in particular and how the Chinese presence could be a form of *new neo-colonialism* (Junbo, 2007; Girouard, 2008; Taylor, 2009). The often unfavourable trade agreements and the debts that many African countries had with the West were seen as a form of neo-colonialism themselves because they wielded immense power over these nations in the market arena. But now the Chinese infiltration of the continent is also seen by some African governments as simply better business and a welcomed break from a long history of western influenced economic reform (Naidu and

Davies, 2006) because China has forgiven billions of dollars in debts as well as omitting tariffs for some of the continents poorest nations (Taylor, 2009). But it is likely that this issue will continue as the business relationship between Ghana and China has strengthened considerably since 2000, mainly because of developmental partnerships and the large imports and trade agreements that the government has with China (Tsikata *et al.*, 2008). The presence of the Chinese in the beaded craft commodity chain will continue to strengthen as long as the agreements that the Ghanaian government has with China continues to strengthen. But for the Ghanaian government to untangle itself would mean to revert back to the previous western economic relationships that were apparently proving unfruitful. Still the relationship is ultimately considered a complex one (Girouard, 2008) and an uneven one that will inevitably lead to the African continent ultimately becoming subject to the Chinese government and its influence (Junbo, 2007). In some sense handicraft traders especially in the Arts Centre are seeing traces of this and are viewing the Chinese developmental presence in the same way that Telfer (2012:161) viewed development: as “very much about power and control”.

### **9.2.3 How Traders Use Expenditure from Craft Sales**

Tourist expenditure on handicrafts, though inadequate in terms of the weekly sales figures (Chapter 6), has still assisted craftsmen from larger scale businesses as well as smaller one-man businesses, to sustain themselves, their homes, their businesses and their families. Earnings from sales have gone towards four main areas: maintaining their businesses, educating themselves and their families, housing maintenance, and food. Craft sellers in this sample spend in areas that are not uncommon in studies that have examined local spending patterns amongst traders and vendors in Ghana (Levin *et al.*, 1999). But investing in one’s business was the area where both men and women invested 50% or more of their earnings from craft sales.

There are important gender-related implications in these expenditure patterns, especially with regards to *food*. It was found in Chapter six that no women spent 50% or more of their income gained from craft sales on food and that it was rather the men who spent

significantly (50% or more) in this area. This expenditure on food reflected the traditional gender roles played by many men and women in Ghanaian society where men are traditionally regarded as the bread winners and as a result are relied upon to provide money for food. But it is important to note that difficult economic conditions in Ghana have also played a role in forcing gendered roles to alter and adapt to the changing climate. Nonetheless this does not detract from the fact that female craft sellers are quite business oriented. Despite important developments in gender equality issues in Ghana, especially in education, there does not seem to be a strong enough focus on empowering women in the craft sector specifically. They are being helped to an extent through specific private initiatives, but because the handicraft sector is currently male dominated, and has been for some time, more needs to be done to increase the representation of female craft traders in the sector. Because female economic empowerment is seen as a key strategy in poverty reduction, policy that seeks to narrow the gender equality gap must address this issue and merge with tourism policy in this respect. When it comes to sustaining a livelihood, craft traders still require adequate levels of all the forms of capital to sustain a living, (Ashley and Carney, 1999; Brock and Coulibaly, 1999; DFID, 1999), but their strong reliance on financial capital - like most vulnerable actors in West Africa - is being replaced by a growing respect for human/social capital. So tourist expenditure is helping to sustain businesses and develop informal markets. And by doing this it is generating economic opportunities and financial opportunities for the individual and the state (Siddique and Ghosh, 2003). By reinvesting in their businesses, tourist expenditure through crafts is ensuring that handicraft businesses continue to function.

#### **9.2.4 The Tour Operator Influence on Tourist Expenditure**

As discussed in Chapter eight, the tour operator has considerable impact on how and where tourist expenditure is spent. Tour operators sampled were responsible for bringing in at least 2,000 African American tourists to Ghana annually. This would have accounted for a fifth of the 10,000 estimated African American tourist arrivals in Ghana (Mensah, 2004; Mwakikagile, 2005). So tour operators are significantly important actors

in Diaspora tourism in Ghana. The results reflect studies on tour operator management that have argued how these operators are key stakeholders that impact on the entire tourist process, from the moment tourists arrive to the moment they leave (Mathieson and Hall, 1992; Cornelissen, 2005). Cavlek (2002) in particular argued that tour operators have considerable influence on tourist demand and decision making. Shah and Gupta (2000) also argued how they had the power to saturate or dry out specific areas thereby impacting considerably on the extent of tourism benefits gained by the local community. This was found to be the case in this study as well. The structure of tour itineraries and the style of tour operator recommendations were the two main ways in which tour operators influenced the flow of tourist expenditure in the handicraft sector. Tour itineraries did give tourists an opportunity to purchase handicraft items from informal craft markets. But this is constrained by the fact that many of these opportunities were based on a *push* and *pull* strategy influenced by tourist preferences and tour operator recommendations for particular craftsmen. The lack of quality of handicraft items was one of the influences that caused tour operators to be selective in their choice of traders to do business with, thus redirecting spending from other vulnerable craftsmen. This is not uncommon in many handicraft industries in other sub-Saharan African countries that also have issues with craft quality (Mitchell and Coles, 2009).

There have been a few tourists who have challenged the operators' authority and management techniques and questioned their business ethics, but because of the level of trust that most tourists have for their operators, this ability to direct expenditure without contestation is likely to continue. But this begs the question as to why tourists trust their operators so much; and it mainly comes down to *experience*. A positive initial experience is likely to create a level of trust that turns into loyalty which then can be *marketed* in the future.

But there is the possibility that the tour operator is wielding even more power through the use of social capital. Social networks are likely playing a key role in these strategies as tour operator's personal contacts, friends, business relationships and relatives are said

to be impeding access of craft sellers to tourists. Though the study was unable to confirm this information, it does have significant implications for the management of tourists and is an area which warrants further investigation in the future. The findings of this study show how it has contributed to the body of literature on Diaspora tourism in sub-Saharan Africa and especially in Ghana, West Africa. The study has examined a previously ignored area of Diaspora relations and homeland development literature by exploring the expenditure patterns of the *ancestral* Diaspora and how their spending filters through the crafts commodity chain in Ghana. Though the value of the African American tourist market to Ghana has never been in question, little has been done in this area to figure out just how beneficial they are, especially to the crafts sector. But more importantly, the study has focused responsibly in many ways on the local Ghanaian trader's point of view of Diaspora tourists and how they are affecting *their* livelihoods. Although the tourists were also central to the study, their impacts on craft trader livelihoods could only be properly examined and assessed through the eyes of those impacted on.

### **9.3 Limitations of the Current Research**

In addition to the limitations outlined in section 4.15, one main limitation of the research is that it is confined to one country in West Africa and it is hard to know whether the results are replicable for other countries. If the results are replicable they are much less certain to be replicable in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa that do not possess any remnants of the transatlantic slave trade. This is because the slave trade was a very important element in this as it is this which created the African American tourist, and that tragic history has had significant impact on the nature of their touristic experiences and expenditure patterns. Nonetheless, exploring homeland development through Diaspora tourism in other sub-Saharan locations *without* the backdrop of the emotional remnants of transatlantic slavery would be an area worthy of attention. Though a study of this nature would lack the emotional impact that has driven African Diaspora tourism, exploring whether the absence of the 'darkness' of the tourism would have any significant bearing on tourist expenditure patterns is an aspect that this study could also

have concentrated on. But the study has shown that it is the remnants of the slave trade that has fueled bead patronage especially, so there is no doubt that taking away the slave history would take away the sentimental value and thus the unique attraction that beaded crafts have had for African Americans. But other arts and crafts items without this connection could be just as important in different ways and for different reasons.

One important limitation centres on not being able to fully follow or trace the network of beneficiaries of beaded crafts globally. Because of financial constraints, tracing the network of beneficiaries of crafts sales had to be confined to Ghana alone. This study has shown that African American tourist expenditure on crafts, especially beaded crafts is international and filters through to other countries within sub-Saharan Africa (Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania<sup>35</sup>, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo) and outside of sub-Saharan Africa (China, India and other countries in Europe and North America). Exploring how the beaded craft sector functions in countries such as Togo and the Ivory Coast, which are much closer, would have provided further support to many of the claims made concerning imports and exports to these countries and enriched the study even further. Following the tourist dollar to China especially would have pushed the discussion on Chinese impacts into the foreground, where respondent views on their impacts on the beaded craft sector in the country could have been corroborated or even compared with a case study with one of the Ghana bead exporters in China. But this is not to say that secondary data and respondent views were not sufficient. This extra step would have simply enriched the data collected and provided a stronger international reference point for the study. But this study is a large one and just tracing the network of beneficiaries is a large task in itself.

More case studies could have been conducted on one-man business owners to get a better sense of the scale at which tourists' expenditure impacts on their livelihoods in the Odumasi-Krobo region. The undisclosed number, in addition to trader estimates of over a hundred of these sellers currently operating, suggests that there could be more - which leaves a gap for further investigation. But conducting over a hundred interviews with

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<sup>35</sup> Mauritania is classified as being part of sub-Saharan Africa, but also part of the Arab world.



unregistered bead manufacturers, that had to be located, would undoubtedly have been a daunting task for any researcher. And while the case study conducted on Emmanuel Kpodo's business provided valuable insight into the businesses of such manufacturers, this would obviously not be the case for all of them. So additional interviews and investigations in this area would go further to understanding the one-man business operation in Southern Ghana.

Another limitation is that the research focuses on handicrafts and there are a lot of other economic spin offs from Diaspora tourism that have not been detailed. For instance, though not a handicraft product, Shea butter could have been given more attention in this study, because of its continued presence within handicraft centres in the study regions and its rising popularity amongst African Americans. Thus its unique value in the market could have been further explored or used to compliment the study in some way. The accommodation, transportation, entertainment and food and beverage sector are other areas that could be explored in more depth. However these are better covered by existing studies and are also areas that have already been addressed by government; the topics of this study have provided much more of an original contribution to the study of tourism in West Africa and Ghana, therefore. And in most other work on more general expenditure patterns, the focus was on tourists in general and not on the Diaspora tourist. There are some interesting themes in terms of more general expenditure which emerged during this study which could offer opportunities for future research on African American tourists. The study found that many tour operators found their African American clients to be more particular about the quality of their accommodation than European tourists, for example. Focusing on the accommodation sector, and how it is patronized by the African American tourist market could open up a whole new line of inquiry for future research. This is because there are certain contradictions inherent within this as wanting to experience the traditions and localities of the homeland but not compromising when it comes to comfort is another area of potential research. Their preference for more upscale accommodation means that budget accommodations may be losing out on this tourist market.

Another limitation is that the study had to rely on general figures and estimates when it came to assessing trader incomes and expenditure. Though this was largely the result of lack of specific records being kept, as well as an issue with privacy, and in some instances literacy issues, more work could have been focused in this area to achieve more detailed information on trader incomes. Though the study used GLSS figures as well as some trader estimates on income and spending to come to a conclusion, more specific information would have provided an even more detailed picture on tourist livelihood impacts. But it is also important to reiterate that in this case, the traders themselves were still the best source of data in the absence of specific figures. This work is much more suited to government data collection methods as only these can improve the probability of such data being kept, even in the informal trader sector. Though this is likely to be met with some resistance, it is still necessary, as relying on figures that are somewhat dated is not always the best.

#### **9.4 Implications for Future Research**

This study has significant implications when it comes to tourism studies in general, the Ghana tourism industry, Diaspora studies, for our understanding of how tourism's effects can be studied using commodity chain analysis and for our understanding of west African livelihoods.

Firstly though, an important methodological implication is the mix of research tools used to retrieve data from the various tourism actors. Though the research methods used in this study were not new, they had to be combined in ways to address the varying literacy levels and comfortability with the interview process. We are aware of the challenges researchers face in conducting research in West Africa and with literacy levels and this suggests that any future research that the Ghana tourism industry does will also have to incorporate some sort of mixed methods to achieve the same 'level' of data from the different types of actors.

When it comes to tourism studies the implications are that the African American tourist market are still an important component of international mobility and emotion not only plays a key role in the experience of the tourist, specifically the Diaspora tourist but they have significant influence on commercial interactions. For the Ghana tourism industry, one conclusion that can be drawn is that African Americans tourists are a market that can no longer be lumped together in the same category as all international tourists category, because they making enough impact in the crafts sector to be concentrated on separately. This has already been done to an extent in terms of the Emancipation/PANAFEST festivals that have been held by the tourism industry; however, more focus could be placed on identifying exact numbers of African American tourists that visit, their travel patterns and motivations whilst in the country. Another area worth examination is on African American tourists in Ghana who were descendants of Ghana specifically and how this affected their homeland return experience. This idea could have been built upon further by comparing Ghanaian descendent Diaspora tourists in Ghana with those descendants from other west African countries who are also visiting Ghana and how each set of Diaspora experience homeland return differently.

There is plenty of scope for more work on the Diaspora's economic effects through tourism in West Africa whilst abroad. Given that there was a limit to the number of African American tourists due to their tight itineraries (as discussed in Chapter four), interviews could be done in the USA where it would be easier to get more time with more individuals who had visited west African countries, not just Ghana. Their importance as a current and future market must be reiterated because their attachment to Ghana has made them a sustainable resource. Tourism policies stress that the country needs to diversify its resource base to limit its dependence on potentially unsustainable resources (NTP, 2006), and with the controversy currently surrounding the benefits and use of the recent oil discovery, expansion of opportunities for the Diaspora market as a national resource would be a desirable policy objective. Their emotional connection, as regularly shown throughout the study, is one that has existed since the slave trade era, has continued till today and is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Tourism policy makers are aware of their importance but need to review and recognize that

though tourists are significant portions of their shopping budget on crafts, their significance is also more than financial.

In terms of Diaspora studies, as already explained debates in authenticity are wide and varied and when it comes to the Diaspora and crafts, the finding about the role of issues of authenticity for handicrafts suggest that policy makers could helpfully address this issue to ensure that the tourists suggestions and desires are more fully incorporated into tourism products. This very important finding means that at least when it comes to commerce with crafts, the African American tourist market are quite demanding and complex in terms of what they desire from retail shopping and consumerism. A refocus towards authenticity will encourage the development of new approaches to creating and representing the handicraft industry.

This also suggests that for consumerism and souvenir or retail shopping in Ghana, the industry has not been fully understood and needs further research and careful positioning in the tourist industry. Although some handicraft products are on occasion promoted or adapted for specific occasions, they could sometimes be better tailored to the African Diaspora market coming to Ghana or to African American specifically. It is easy to assume that crafts are tailored for this market but results imply that improvements could be achieved. Further to this, as the research focused on beaded crafts there is room for more research following the commodity chain for other handicrafts, such as the traditional Kente cloth which is another popular item of African Americans or even souvenir sculptures or figurines. The fabric commodity chain in particular is an area worth researching further. The declining state of the Ghanaian fabric industry (Quartey, 2006; Abdallah, 2010; Andoh and Elolo, 2012) was briefly discussed in Chapter Five, but more in depth research could be done to examine other factors in the commodity chain such as how Diaspora tourist demands influence production and sale in the midst of the decline. The Ghanaian handicrafts sector markets its traditional heritage and culture by converting them to consumer items, and the general idea is that this will automatically attract the Diaspora tourist, but the finicky nature of this market suggests that more needs to be done than simply *marketing what is*

*available*, rather the focus should be on *creating a marketable product*.

Another implication of this study when it comes to West African livelihoods is that the livelihoods of individuals in the informal trade sector, specifically handicraft sellers in Ghana are still vulnerable and susceptible to many of the same challenges faced by other West African countries. The coping strategies that craft traders employ do not just include the typical adaptation and diversification sales strategies that many sellers in the informal trading sector use but also include, out of necessity, aggressive persistence to ensure that sales are made. So there is resilience in adapting and coping with their lives. But this needs to be increased, by increasing their strategic options and enabling them to adapt and diversify in the current touristic climate. These strategies could then be incorporated into educational training programmes to progress the sector. A stronger relationship with the public and private tourism sector should be fostered. As Acquah (2013) found, the majority of craftsmen he interviewed did not have any relationship with the national tourism board.

For many academics in Diaspora literature who have focused on the social contradictions inherent in homeland return, it is this very social-human capital that craft traders and tourist alike have valued. Social capital in this sense has taken on a new dimension and their negative and positive impact on craft sales suggests that more research could be done to conceptualize and capitalize on this intangible concept. This notion, however, differs from the emotional connection that is already being made. The social side of commerce should therefore be a prioritized area of Diaspora relations and tourism development as well as a key focus area in current and future policy development. The role that all these factors play in the development of retail shopping or souvenir shopping in Ghana is an area which must now be transferred from the empirical and theoretical field of research to the policy and implementation field.

In terms of the commodity chain analysis, the important finding that tourist patronage of beaded crafts has led to an unusual power shift within the commodity chain has significant policy implications when it comes to a focus on micro enterprises. It was

found that small informal actors had taken significant power away from larger scale businesses within the chain and were thus able to control events within the chain and impact significantly on bead production and patronage. Not only does more research need to be placed on these vulnerable but now powerful actors within the chain, but policy makers need to develop strategies that will continue to empower these actors. Craft traders have taken control of their own businesses and found ways to maintain their livelihoods but more input from the public and private tourism sector could further strengthen and formalize the informal beaded crafts sector. This suggests that these actors who have now taken significant power away from larger scale businesses within the chain can control events within the chain and impact significantly on bead production and patronage. This is not to suggest that the medium scale production centres will no longer be influential, and thus should be ignored, but because of the continuing difficulties of the economy, larger businesses are likely to continue to downsize in order to sustain a living. Therefore more attention must be placed on formalizing this fragmenting sector.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Guide questions for respondents**

#### **Handicraft traders**

What do you think about African American tourists in general?

What do you think of African Americans as customers?

What percentage of your customers (non purchasers) are African American?

How many African American actually buy from you per week

What kind of items do African Americans purchase from you the most?

Apart from African Americans, who are your other customers?

How do you spend the money gained from craft sales?

Where do you procure your craft items from (person, shop, business etc)?

How much do you pay to procure your craft items?

#### **Tour Operators**

How many African Americans do you receive annually?

What are your ranges of tour packages?

What is your management process for clients?

What are your most popular circuits?

Extent of trader –tourist interaction?

In your experience/view, what are African American tourist spending habits like?

Value of African American tourists to tourism development in Ghana?



**African American tourists**

Why are you visiting/have visited the Elmina and/or Cape Coast castles?

Is buying handicrafts at Elmina or Cape Coast part of your plan when visiting? Please explain your reasons.

Since your arrival in Ghana, what have your impressions been of local traders that you have encountered (general, personal, and business?)

Does your tour company/guide/tour operator impact or affect the way you spend your money on arrival (in general) and on traders (specifically), if so how

What are your experiences (if participated) or expectations (if not) of the upcoming PANAFEST /Emancipation festivals?

How do you generally spend your money on arrival?

How much (specific or %) have you spent on handicraft purchases since your arrival?

How much is spent on the general cost of the trip (accommodation, transport, food, flights etc)?

What kind of items have you purchased from handicraft traders and why?

What kind of locally made items attract you and why?

What local items would you like to see more of?

Aside from your expenditure, how have you invested financially in any endeavours whilst in Ghana?

Finally, based on your total visitor experience, any advice for handicraft traders in Ghana?

Additional comments

Appendix 2: Trends in bead imports in Ghana 2009-2012; China and other countries

Source: Data adapted from 'Bead imports and exportations in Ghana: 2005-2012'; CEPS

Year	HS Code	HS Description	Goods Description	Origin	Number of imports from region	Total number of imports	FOB GHC	CIF GHC	Tax Paid GHC
2009	7018100000	Glass smallware (incl. beads, imitation pearls/stones, etc)	Beads; Imitation, glass, plastic, loose, assorted	China	76	109	263967.47	298610.58	120234.64
				Other countries	33		389991.01	424022.20	170607.62
2010				China	123	142	251542.51	310123.75	125151.59
				Other countries	19		333624.28	354329.14	142972.97
2011				China	59	126	340094.30	407637.36	162519.11
				Other countries	67		302873.79	324794.85	131191.00
2012				China	8	10	57878.76	67588.19	17185.85
				Other countries	2		92428.19	97.717.4	39514.17

FOB: Free on board costs

CIF: Cost, Insurance and Freight costs